

MARY TODD LINCOLN

Deceased

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Mary Todd Lincoln

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MARY TODD LINCOLN

Something About the Wife of the
tyred President.

On the 4th of November, 1842, Abraham Lincoln and Miss Mary Todd were united in marriage by the Rev. Charles Dresser in the house of Hon. Ninian W. Edwards, at Springfield, the bride being a sister of Mrs. Edwards. They were daughters of Hon. Robert S. Todd, of Kentucky, and the family was one of the oldest and most honored in that commonwealth. Col. John Todd, the great-uncle of Mrs. Lincoln, marched from Virginia with Gen. George Rogers Clarke to the capture of Kaskaskia and Vincennes. In December, 1778, he was appointed by Governor Patrick Henry, of Virginia, governor of "Illinois county"—that great state, then in embryo, being part of Virginia's territory. He had been one of the first permanent settlers in Kentucky, and while encamped on the site of their destined town they heard of the opening of the American revolution and patriotically named their town Lexington. He was killed at the battle of Blue Licks in 1782, his brother Levi, Mrs. Lincoln's grandfather, being an active participant and one of the few white survivors of that fatal day.

For some time after their marriage the Lincolns boarded at The Globe, in Springfield, then kept by a widow, Mrs. Beck, and there their first child was born, now known as the Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, secretary of war to Presidents Garfield and Arthur, whose strange, sad experience it has been to stand by the deathbed of two assassinated presidents. Of the other two sons of Lincoln, little Willie died in the White House in 1862, and Thomas, affectionately called Tad by his father, died in Chicago in 1871 at the age of 18. Mrs. Lincoln died at the home of her sister, Mrs. Edwards, July 16, 1882. Three days later her remains were laid beside those of her husband, Governor S. M. Cullom, Gen. John A. McClernand and other prominent citizens acting as pallbearers. The following from the funeral sermon of Rev. J. A. Reed, pastor of the church in which Mrs. Lincoln first avowed her religious

grown together from the same roots. The taller and stronger one had died, and I observed that the weaker and shorter was also dying. Growing and struggling together, one could not live without the other. Years ago Abraham Lincoln placed upon the finger of Mary Todd a ring bearing the inscription: 'A. L. to Mary. Love is eternal.' Side by side they walked until the demon of tragedy separated them. When the nation was so shocked over that sad and dire event, how much more she must have been shocked who had years before come to be a part of his life. It cannot be any disrespect to her memory to say that when Lincoln died she died; at least it may be said that she was a dying woman during all the years that have come and gone since the assassin's bullet sped its way and sent her husband from earth to heaven."

She was sorely tried during the civil war, for it was no secret that she grieved for the sufferings of her relatives in the south, and respect for her husband did not always restrain critical tongues and pens. She sat beside her husband when he received the fatal shot, and her mind never recovered from the shock.

No further seek her merits to disclose,
Or draw her frailties from their dread abode;
There they alike in trembling hope repose,
The bosom of her Father and her God.



MRS. LINCOLN.

faith, fully and beautifully expresses the judgment of the best minds on the later events of her life:

"A while ago I remember seeing, while rambling in the Allegheny mountains, two pines which appeared to have

LINCOLN AND HERNDON.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE GREAT WAR PRESIDENT.

His Personal Character, His Marriage, and His Relations with His Wife—Lincoln's Birth—His Father of Puritan Descent—Social Standing in Springfield—Was His Wife a Drag and a Stumbling Block?

Seven years after Lincoln's assassination there was published a large book described by its author as "an authentic biography" of Abraham Lincoln. The writer was Ward H. Lamon, a lawyer transplanted by Lincoln from the Illinois prairies to Washington to become by the President's nomination an important Government official. There had been earlier biographies, more or less incomplete and unsatisfactory, but Lamon's was the first compilation pretending to give the genesis and progress of the man up to the time when his name began to be known beyond the limits of Illinois. It was along terribly realistic lines. The downright, unvarnished tale of the obscure, miserable—almost hopeless—boyhood; the doubtful, struggling transition period to manhood, and especially the marriage and domestic relations of Lincoln, was shocking to those who had idealized the murdered President as a martyr.

The story contained nothing that might not have been reasonably expected concerning this man of the new West; nevertheless, it was generally felt that Lamon had told more than was needed or wanted; not that anything essentially low or mean or hidden had been discovered, but only that it was all so wretchedly human and merely natural, so different from the preconceived notions of the idolators, that they would fain have shut out the new Lincoln and clung in complacent ignorance to the ideal as originally formed. It was hard to admit that he was but a man after all.

Twenty years later William H. Herndon's life of Lincoln appeared. Although somewhat modified in tone, it was along the same lines of exasperating, ill-considered realism. The two biographies are almost identical in their facts and conclusions, though Herndon's is as much a character study as a recitation of events. It is easily discernible without his own prefatory statement that Lamon's work was prepared in co-operation with Herndon, and largely from data collected by the latter, which explains their otherwise singular parallelism. The declared purpose of both was to present Lincoln to the world exactly as he was known to them—as he walked, talked, loomed, told stories, looked, and dressed, down to the poise of his ears, the trend of his nose, and the blueness of his shinbones. The circulation of his blood is not beneath notice. In this struggle for realism everything is laid bare and ruthlessly dissected. The result is a heterogeneous medley of the serious and the comic, the grotesque, and even the terrible, that as a whole strikes one as more offensive than pleasing, notwithstanding the undeniable value of a great part of it. On examining this queer mass the reader cannot refrain from speculations upon the motives of the authors. But whatever they were, and however much we may dislike portions of it, their work cannot be ignored.

Herndon availed himself keenly of his special opportunities for the acquisition of every sort of knowledge of Lincoln, whose associate and law partner he was for many years. He appears to have been an attentive, even watchful, observer of Lincoln's movements from the moment he became a personage of consequence. Subsequently he devoted much time, labor, and expense to the collection of information relating to a still earlier period of Lincoln's life. Herndon's style, like some of his facts and inferences, is quaint and often interesting, though not always pleasing. From a study of his book I conceive this author to have been a narrow, perhaps superstitious and credulous, man of many tins, a sort of crank with an underlying strain of rock-ribbed prejudices. Nevertheless, I gather that within his mental

limits and environment he was an honest, good man; that he delved laboriously and wrote faithfully, conscientiously setting down everything gleaned which struck him as important or interesting—too much, indeed, and often without discrimination.

While it is highly probable that this book will in some particulars be accepted as an authority on Lincoln's early life and manners, I do not think Herndon had a penetrating mind or made the most of his materials. What he states as a positive fact may be relied upon, but his speculations have little value. It is not unlikely that some things he saw and heard were misunderstood; others were misinterpreted. For instance, he says that Lincoln in his ambition was politic and reserved, even crafty. Are we then to believe that Herndon was the only man to fathom this deep, wily nature? the only man to whom Lincoln fully disclosed himself? He is often glaringly inconsistent in his conclusions.

The ill-judged pertinacity with which he dwells upon every detail of Lincoln's love affairs, events having no significant features differing from the experiences of hundreds of rural swains, holding them up to the derision of the curious, is clearly an impropriety. And the account of the final courtship and marriage, together with his fallacious view of the relations of the husband and wife afterward, is in even worse taste; it is uncalled for by any apparent necessity, literary or otherwise, for it teaches no lesson and conveys no useful information. Besides being repugnant to the feelings of everybody who reveres the memory of Lincoln, it lays the author open to the charge of malice toward a woman. Next to his ill-founded hypothesis that Lincoln was always and only a scheming, calculating, selfish politician, and an ingrate to those who abetted him, Herndon's story of this marriage and characterization of the wife are the most distasteful and offensive, and incompatible with the probabilities.

He tells us that "this was wholly a marriage of convenience, contrived by friends; that Lincoln entered upon the pursuit of Miss Todd from the motive that her social leadership would bring to his political support influences otherwise beyond his reach; and when on closer view he would have retreated he found himself entangled by a promise he would not break. This has been disproved by the minute and laborious investigations of Miss Tarbell. Equally ambitious and selfish, unerringly foreseeing his coming greatness, Herndon says that she deliberately threw her wiles around this unsophisticated man, and in spite of his forebodings compelled him to marry her. This view also turns out to be equally false, yet Herndon thereupon jumps to the conclusion that their married life was unhappy, that she was an unloving and unloved wife, he a disappointed and chagrined man, making the best of a bad bargain. In evidence he cites the Judge and coterie of lawyers with whom Lincoln associated continuously six months out of every year as holding a like conviction, because they observed that Lincoln preferred to remain at the various county fairs towns week in and week out rather than to follow their example of regularly going home each Sunday. This is not evidence; it is only presumption. It was impossible, according to Herndon himself, to reason with certainty from the hints and manifestations of this extraordinary man.

Herndon largely founds his assumption that this was an ill-assorted union upon Lincoln's habitual melancholy. Now, I do not believe that Lincoln was normally an unhappy being at any stage of his existence, except, possibly, during the tremendous strain of the war time. He was, doubtless, always a morbid man, and at times subject to great mental depression; he looked rather sad at all times, from his limp appearance and the natural cast of countenance, but that so virile and ambitious a man was habitually gloomy is incredible. His superficial manifestations were all the other way. And I certainly think his marriage caused him no unhappiness. Herndon's own presentation of Lincoln's character, as much as anything, leads me to doubt his judgment on this point, though it is true I have had need to obtain written evidence of a later period which Herndon never saw.

From early boyhood the ordinary recourse of Lincoln, according to Herndon and Lamon, for solace was either total and apparently saddest solitude of an introspective nature, or the noisy association of a council of boisterous

companions. He ran from one extreme to the other. His marriage seems to have made no change in these antipodal characteristics.

From all contemporaneous testimony he at all times preferred the society of men to that of women. Men he understood and mastered; the other sex he instinctively shrank from. As a clerk in Ellis's store at New Salem it is said that Lincoln could not be prevailed upon to wait upon a woman customer. In manner and mental characteristics as well as personal appearance Lincoln was a quaint and eccentric being; no ordinary rules applied to him. There is a lame effort to prove that he was a cold and indifferent man to individuals. True, he loved humanity as a whole and hated nobody; but individually, according to Herndon, he had little use for men, except in so far as they contributed to promote his own ambition. He was self-confident, self-reliant; seldom consulted others and took nobody fully into his confidence.

Lincoln could be kind and thoughtful, even chivalrous, to women upon occasion, but Herndon here hardly describes a man who could be merely companionable to a woman, even his wife. Beyond being a good housewife, woman to a certain extent appears to have had no place in his scheme of sociology. His mind was almost wholly bent toward its political aspects. His relations with his wife and his manner toward her are said to have been in keeping with this analysis of his character.

Herndon himself assigns other reasons for Lincoln's "dripping melancholy" than his marriage equally irreconcilable with the truth. It was a marked peculiarity long before he met Miss Todd. All his contemporaries agree that he had this "woe-struck" look from his early boyhood. The most satisfactory aspect of Lincoln's character given us by Herndon is that he was predominantly one without vanity or egotism, full of humility and kindness; utterly devoid of pride or pretence of any kind; a hater of sham in every form, and making it ridiculous in all possible ways; fraternizing cheerfully and of choice with the very mudsills of the society in which he moved; in short, the most democratic of men. Yet, remarkably enough, this biographer would have us believe that Lincoln was constantly oppressed by humiliating knowledge of his lowly origin. Now this is utterly preposterous. Could this philosopher of the common people, he whom Herndon proudly describes as always taking the practical, common-sense view of every subject, ever have given himself one single moment's uneasiness by futile broodings over a mere abstraction, which he must have seen cut no figure whatever with the unsentimental border folk of those days? Associates and candidates for all honors were accepted upon their own merits, without question as to their origin, immediate or remote.

Just here it may be noted that both Lamon and Herndon, without directly saying so, designedly leave the impression that Lincoln constantly lived under the shadow of some great blot upon his birth; there was even doubt if his father and mother were legally married; that he was particularly weighed down on account of their lowly and obscure origin. The later investigations of the much abler, more thorough and trustworthy biographer, Miss Tarbell, have completely negatived these errors by unearthing the original marriage certificate of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, and further disclosing that Lincoln sprang, on his father's side at least, from a long line of respectable, even distinguished, Puritan ancestors. Thus have been utterly exploded some of the fictions upon which Herndon erected the superstructure of his theories concerning Lincoln's alleged mental gloominess.

Lincoln doubtless knew all about his origin; at any rate, he was aware that his genesis was probably as respectable as that of a very large proportion of his fellow citizens. Miss Todd arrived from Kentucky heralded as a member of an "old family," one really prominent through several generations as an ultra-fashionable, endowed with many accomplishments, yet the raw, uncultured Lincoln had no difficulty in making her his wife. She does not seem to have objected to his lowly origin; doubtless never thought of it.

Notwithstanding his probable thoughtlessness in respect of the practice of the small attentions the world considers due a wife from the husband, I am thoroughly convinced that in his own fashion Lincoln loved his wife as well as the average husband does. All the direct evidence shows that he was thoughtful and considerate of her in all important matters. Upon receiving the announcement of his first nomination for the Presidency in a Springfield newspaper office, he at once withdrew, remarking that he must go and "tell a little woman down the street the news." When the great prize was won her interest in the event was the first consideration, after all.

Describing Lincoln's abject poverty and struggles for a livelihood after his marriage, Herndon naively admits that "his wife shared in his struggles." And he continues:

She was a plucky little woman, and in fact endowed with a more resolute nature than he. She was gifted with a rare insight into the motives that actuate mankind, and there is no doubt that much of Lincoln's success was in a measure attributable to her brightness and the stimulus of her influence. . . . She loved power and prominence, and when occasionally she came down to our office it seemed to me then that she was inordinately proud of her tall and ugly husband.

On one occasion at the office she said to Herndon, in Lincoln's absence: "Mr. Lincoln may not be a handsome figure, but the people are perhaps not aware that his heart is as large as his arms are long." Do these things accord with the Herndon conception of an ill-assorted pair who were constantly at loggerheads; of a husband driven from home by a foolish, woman's uncontrollable tongue; of a lonely, disappointed, distraught wife, angered and anguished by the deliberate avoidance of a husband who found her an unsympathetic companion? Far from it. On the contrary, they show the chief elements at the foundation of all happy families. How could a strong individuality like Lincoln be swayed by the "stimulus" and "influence" of a woman for whom he had no regard? How could a bright, intelligent woman like this be "inordinately proud" of a husband she did not love and honor? No; Herndon, on his own showing, is in error; he does this man and his wife cruel wrong.

Another of Herndon's extraordinary paradoxes is the foolish conjecture, setting aside all presumption of love, that Miss Todd deliberately accepted Lincoln solely from ambitious motives, or in a fit of jealous, keen, to avenge herself upon him for having previously jilted her. This last is suppositions entirely, and not worthy of attention. In respect of the first it is to be observed that while Lincoln was certainly a rising he was yet a very poor man. The political career of Stephen A. Douglas, his fellow-townsmen, was beyond all question at that day the most promising one in the new West. He was already the leader of the dominant party in Illinois. If ambition, then, was her sole aim, she certainly would have accepted this growing statesman, who for a time sedulously courted her and eventually proposed marriage. Yet Lamonsavers that she discarded Douglas on account of his bad morals. It is singular that she would coolly decline the offer of the brilliant, handsome, and courtly Douglas, whose place was already assured, and turn to the cadaverous, awkward, struggling Lincoln unless her heart had to do with it. It is said that she always maintained that she would marry a future President. Low down as he then was in the political and social scale, did she already foresee Lincoln's success and Douglas's failure? This, of course, will not be credited.

However strong it was, Mrs. Lincoln's ambition, like that of her great husband, appears to have been under proper discipline and well directed. To a young friend who had married a very old man—a mere "bag of bones," as was said—confessedly for his horses, houses, and gold, Miss Todd remarked: "I would rather marry a good man, a man of mind, with hope and bright prospects ahead for position, fame, and power, than to marry all the horses, gold, and bones in the world."

It was not until he had become a considerable public figure, and some years after his marriage, which widened his social opportunities, that Lincoln could have had much conception or appreciation of true, refined home life. Although it is agreed by all authorities that his mother and stepmother were good, wholesome women, it must be measurably true—Herndon sets out that he had previously failed of nearly every association that cultivates and develops the higher domestic instinct. His rude and crude frontier education and limited opportunity for observation of even commonest social forms shut out from him pretty much all knowledge of the brighter, more elevating side of the marriage relation. Like his rough associates of the Sangamon bottoms, to him at first home was a place to "stay at" only when the office at last had to be closed for the night. The uncultured, rough and ready citizen of that time and region—and there were few of a different or superior quality—did not feel it his duty to do more than provide it with meat, drink, and raiment, and deemed it the good wife's part to cook, wash, and mend and keep the "young ones" in order. He volunteered little in addition, and probably expected no more in return. To be a "good provider" was the greatest recommendation a husband could have in that primitive world.

Lincoln was no better and no worse than the average of his contemporaries. He largely gauged other people's desires and necessities by his own, which were few and simple; for himself he cared but little for even the ordinary comforts, to say nothing of the luxuries of a happy home, and consequently gave no heed to a subject on which his mind was either almost a total blank, or busied with the concerns of his political ambition or the law. It is in dealing with the married life of this couple that Herndon discloses not only a large measure of ignorance as to their general relations, and what went on in their household, but arrives at wrong conclusions from what he actually saw. He tells us that for many years their home of necessity was poor and bare, that she had no servant to assist her and did the housework mainly with her own hands. This is disputed. Miss Tarbell secured evidence that Mrs. Lincoln always kept a hired girl-of-all-work. But let it stand. Lincoln saved his own work, milked the cow when they had one, and carried the old rag with which he "rode the circuit." According to Herndon, Lincoln's early view of the use of a parlor was to lie upon its carpet at full length, boots and collar off, with a turned-down chair under his head, to read or for an afternoon's nap.

Now, these things may be true, doubtless are. For a time it is quite likely they were in pinched circumstances in their housekeeping. But

is there any moral turpitude, anything shameful, about this, or indeed anything at all wonderful, considering the time and the circumstances? It is a fact that might have been taken for granted by those all familiar with the subject. This is one of the great objections to Herndon's work. He enlarges too much upon unnecessary things. Nor is this

view of the extreme poverty and early struggles of Lincoln at all repugnant to the average American; it rather enhances the value put upon Lincoln's attributes by the world that he was great and strong enough to rise, under the most adverse circumstances, by his own exertions and inborn talents. Lincoln is perhaps the greatest, but he is not the only American who has risen from the soil.

But to follow Herndon's version to its natural conclusion: In this home he dwelt, ate, and slept, in a hit-or-miss sort of fashion, oblivious of the ordinary rules governing all well-regulated households, and, doubtless, perfectly appalling to its well-bred mistress. Her remonstrances, if she made any, fell upon deaf ears, or were more probably misunderstood, and at best only caused black surprise, for his movements and manners naturally proceeded from the precepts of his early life in a squatter's cabin.

In his morbid, abstracted state, fixatedly intent upon his own ambition, which was all-absorbing, he took no heed of the "strained relation" he was causing, until the exasperated wife's small stock of patience was completely exhausted, and she broke forth into an uncontrollable gust of passion. He never answered her in kind; in sheer pained astonishment he simply withdrew to the office and, as Herndon says, lived on crackers and cheese until the domestic skies cleared again. On this assumed state of affairs Herndon bases his guess that this was an unhappy marriage, a marriage of revenge, a marriage of convenience, a selfish marriage. I can draw no such conclusion from such premises; Herndon is totally at fault on this point. Her very ebullitions of temper prove to me that she bore the strongest affection for her "ungainly husband."

From his bringing up, or rather not bringing up at all, Lincoln, of course, failed to observe the true cause of these unexplained lapses of temper, which have so much discredited the wife with these two biographers. He probably never bothered himself to inquire. It was morally impossible for the man to perceive the effect of his personal neglect, his utter heedlessness of home, upon a well-bred woman like his wife, who had a keen sense of the proprieties. That his queer, low-casid manners and social solecisms could pain or in the smallest degree humiliate her was beyond his comprehension. Yet at times they must have wrung this proud woman's very soul.

In short, to sum up, it was his peculiar temperament, early training and associations, the nature of his employments, not lack of affection for his wife, that made Lincoln prefer to his home, as is alleged, the roaring companionship of the "boys" or brooding solitude. And had Mrs. Lincoln been an angel in disguise, he would doubtless still at certain seasons have preferred the court house, the caucus room, even the tavern, to his own house. If sweet-tempered Aon Rutledge—his first love so much exploited by Herndon—had lived and become Lincoln's wife it would not have been different. Likely there would have been no up-braidings; his thoughtless neglects would have been silently borne; but just the same he would have ridden the circuit, and upon occasion remained away from home without bounden notice of his intentions or whereabouts, and continued to perform these and other eccentricities of the man and his kind and environment without a thought that they caused anxiety and pain to his domestic partner, or were worthy of special observation on the part of his neighbors.

Until Miss Tarbell entered the field, about all this record we had of the Lincoln's married life at Springfield was derived from the pages of Herndon. It is meagre enough. He is particular to recount that they were neither social nor very hospitable; no parties were ever given at their house; Lincoln almost never invited a friend to dine or visit him. The pair, he says, were seldom seen together outside of their home. Mrs. Lincoln attended church regularly; he seldom or never accompanied her. Now, it is clear that if this Herndon version were true, there could have been very little public knowledge of the every-day life, the mutual relations, of these people, or Lincoln's actual feelings toward his wife. If this couple so carefully isolated themselves from the ken of their neighbors, how could all the things relating to their domestic affairs which Herndon and Lamons relate ever, if true, have been known? In fact, Herndon's account bears internal evidence that they were largely guessed at or at best based upon isolated manifestations. He makes no mention of having been himself a visitor at the home of his partner, and there is evidence that he seldom entered its doors. This omission makes it extremely doubtful if he had any intimate acquaintance with the wife, or opportunity for ocular demonstration of her alleged fiery temper. Nor does he quote Lincoln as having ever conversed with him on the subject of his family affairs; Lincoln never told him, nor even hinted that he had made a mistake in marrying Miss Todd, or that he was making the best of a bad bargain, as is set forth in the biography. Herndon's delineation of Lincoln's character makes

it altogether improbable that he would take any one into his confidence in relation to so delicate a personal matter.

Herndon, as is quite evident from his own book, could have had very little if any social status in Springfield. He took no interest in social gatherings. He saw only the seamy and most primitive side of that community. This may account for his slight knowledge of the goings and comings of the Lincoln household. His lack of social culture explains, too, his palpable misinterpretation of the few things that did come under his personal observation. It is thus easy to see how, afterward, he must have been wholly misled in forming his conclusions, for it has been settled by later and more intelligent investigation that the Lincolns did take an interest in social affairs and moved in the best circles of the town, which, it must be remembered, was the capital of the State. Their intercourse with the families of their good neighbors was constant and cordial. It is shown that Lincoln was a regular attendant and extremely popular at receptions in Washington during his single Congressional term, which in those days were more intimately social than the coldly formal ones of the Washington of to-day. We find Lincoln's name appearing in the list of committees on a printed invitation to a cotillion party at Springfield, and the following copy of an original note from Mrs. Lincoln to one of the most prominent ladies of Springfield, a dozen years before he became President, proves that they were not only social and hospitable, but makes it entirely probable that many people of the best quality repeatedly visited their home:

SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

MY DEAR MRS. BRAYMAN: If your health will admit of venturing out such damp weather, we would be much pleased to have you, Mr. B., and the young ladies come round this eve about 7, and pass a social evening; also any friend you may have with you. Yours truly,

MARY LINCOLN.

The "we," of course, includes Mr. Lincoln. This little note of itself largely discredits much of Herndon's stuff about Lincoln's social side. It is evident that he was not wholly devoted to the "boys;" that, notwithstanding all his earlier shortcomings, Lincoln not only enjoyed the society which his rising fortunes and the influence of his wife brought around him, but also her own society.

In short, the premises are too vague and intrinsically doubtful upon which to found the presumption that through Mrs. Lincoln's faults of temperament this was an unhappy marriage. Herndon has adduced no reliable proof in its favor. It is almost wholly founded upon incidental manifestations of her uncertain temper, which were made the most of by malicious enemies and exaggerated into a perennial state of enmity. No confessions of Lincoln or his wife are quoted; no family correspondence is introduced, not a line of written evidence produced to justify Herndon's version of their married life. Very much that is cited weakens his conclusions, and no considerable portion discredits them entirely. Miss Owen, who declined Lincoln's offer of marriage, understood him thoroughly and stated the truth to Herndon—that he was neglectful of the "little links that make up the great chain of a woman's happiness." Only one eye-witness of their daily life is quoted, Mr. James Gourly, a Springfield neighbor, who says: "Lincoln and his wife agreed moderately well," though "frequently Mrs. Lincoln's temper got the better of her." Now, many loving and faithful wives have tempers which occasionally "get the better" of them.

Herndon and all others describe Mrs. Lincoln as one gifted with rare talents; high-bred, proud, witty, brilliant, and intensely ambitious of worldly distinction. There is nothing wrong about all this. Then he associates these attributes with an ungovernable temper and without further explanation waves her off the stage as the unspeakable cause of all Lincoln's woes. This is unfair and it is not reasonable. Is it likely that a person of such "rare talents," refined and high personal pride, coupled with a great ambition, would have fallen or self-control enough to hold within reasonable bound the one fault of an otherwise admirable character? It seems incredible that she would habitually and wantonly make life a burden to the man upon whose fortunes her own rise and happiness were inevitably dependent.

It will not do in the blazing light of Lincoln's great name to put the blame—if blame there was—all upon the woman. If there was unhappiness in that home—and I feel positive there was none—at all of a serious nature—it was the wife and not the husband who was the unhappy and disappointed one. The social philosophers after studying Herndon, will not have far to seek for the cause of whatever heartburnings their roof covered, it was Lincoln himself. But certainly not the knowing, not the intentional cause; not because he did not love his wife as well as he could possibly love any individual. His lack of self-esteem made him unaware that his personal presence contributed in any way to his wife's unhappiness. To Mr. Gourly Mrs. Lincoln stated that she "could have loved him better if he had remained at home more." Not at all improbable.

And after all it is significant that the husband submitted all important affairs to the consideration of the wife. "And," admits

Herndon. "Her decision always ended the matter with Lincoln." With all his seeming neglect, and notwithstanding her unfortunate tempe., Lincoln esteemed his wife and had confidence in her judgment and good faith. They were mutually dependent upon each other; they understood each other perfectly. Lamont says that "Mrs. Lincoln aided to no small extent in the fulfilment of the prophecy that she would be the wife of a President." Lincoln was once tendered the Territorial Governorship of Oregon. Having made a failure in Congress, he wished to accept the place and strike out on new lines. His wife firmly and successfully opposed removing from Illi-

nois; whereupon Lamont remarks: "Time proved she was right, as she usually was in any question of practical politics."

To another biographer who was seeking information concerning their connubial relations Herndon wrote: "All that I know ennobs both." Then the facts were all fresh in his mind; what he knew personally was in their favor. What he subsequently gleaned for his book was largely gossip of questionable authenticity. In another place he says: "When all is at last known, the world, I believe, will divide the censure between Lincoln and his wife." If all he knew was ennobling to both, where is the ground for any censure whatever? Herndon was dealing with a chimera.

The reader will agree with me that Herndon's delineation of the greatest and dearest name in our history is not altogether an edifying picture. In some particulars it seems distorted and absolutely grotesque; in no particular does he show Lincoln in a really attractive form, except in his humanitarianism. Yet in nearly every aspect I think Lincoln is held by the world at large to be about the most fascinating personality of the century, perhaps of all the centuries. Herndon is often wrong in his estimates. He commits a gross injustice in ascribing to Lincoln the character of a political ingrate. Perhaps some disappointed office seeker supplied him with his "facts" on this head.

The record shows that Lincoln promptly rewarded many of his personal friends with offices. He named the unknown David Davis for the United States Supreme bench. In spite of a storm of opposition, almost overwhelming, he put Simon Cameron and Caleb B. Smith into his Cabinet as a reward for important services in the National Republican Convention which nominated him. He made his friend, Ward H. Lamont, Marshal of the District of Columbia. Another class of friends, like Leonard Swett, who declined all office, were his close advisers in the dispensation of patronage to others. He rewarded E. B. Washburne by making his brother, Cadwallador, a Major-General, and keeping him in high command. In looking over the field, I find Illinois fared pretty well at Lincoln's hands, and nearly all those who drew political prizes appear to have owed it to Lincoln's personal friendship rather than to any command or claims of their own. Even Herndon himself was not forgotten, for among the telegrams sent during the rebellion I find the following original draft of one in Lincoln's handwriting:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, Feb. 10, 1863.
William H. Herndon, Springfield, Ill.

Would you accept a job of about a month's duration at St. Louis, five dollars a day and mileage?

A. LINCOLN.

This was not much of a "job," to be sure, yet it was—something unusual—voluntarily tendered by the President of the United States, which gave it importance. There are many other telegrams among the old files in the War Department of similar import. Whenever a "job" was necessary to be done, I find that Lincoln immediately looked up some friend to do it. A jury of the sourest politicians in the country would promptly acquit him of the charge of ingratitude after an examination of the unpublished telegrams and letters in the War Department.

After their removal to Washington there is plenty of indisputable testimony showing that the relations of Lincoln and his wife were very different from what Herndon evidently believed them to be. He was either grossly misled by gossip, or there was a complete change in their manner toward each other. As they were then both considerably past the middle age, few will give credence to so sudden a transition. Some of this evidence I have recently published; it differs materially from that which comes from Springfield—the mere tittle-tattle of a country town. It is that of eye-witnesses, that of the correspondence of the parties themselves. It may be argued from the Herndon standpoint that in the White House Lincoln was obliged to yield his log-cabin habits to the usages of higher society, which change, having a softening influence upon Mrs. Lincoln, would explain the more cheerful state of feeling that prevailed between them. At any rate, Lincoln could not "ride the circuit" in the White House, and consequently he was "at home" more, and their manners and conduct when together came more under public observation. Whatever occurred—good, bad, or indifferent—was actually seen and noted by a score or more of household attaches, and not guessed at, as at Springfield. And it may be taken for granted that the very worst was known.

But it is unnecessary to pursue the subject further. Sufficient evidence has been presented completely to dispose of Herndon's conclusions upon the relations of Lincoln and his wife, as well as many of his errors concerning the general characteristics of both. Herndon doubtless would have materially modified his book in several particulars had he been aware of certain facts, developed by research made long since its publication, leaving no doubt of Lincoln's true relations with his wife, which were essentially different from this author's version.

LESLIE J. PERRY.

New York Sun 1891

Clonning

15
ramp

The Mother and the Wife of Lincoln.

To the Editor of The New York Times:

At this time, when the Nation is engaged in recalling the words and deeds of the Great Lincoln, I regret so little credit is given to the two individuals who shaped that splendid life for service—his wife and his mother.

Ruskin has said, "The soul's armor is never well set to the heart until braced by a woman's hand, and as she braces lightly, human honor falls or stands." These two splendid Kentucky women deserve some recognition from the hands of this Nation, as well as the husband and son. A monument ought to be erected to their memory upon Kentucky soil. The opportunity for making such a monument is offered at Lexington, the home of the Todd family, by Sayre College, where the Todds have been educated. This college was organized in 1854 and chartered in 1856—has a magnificent record of unbroken service of fifty-five years. At present it is in need of a new dormitory and a gymnasium building—an opportunity to make a monument to Nancy Hanks and Mary Todd; also it needs an endowment of \$1,000,000 for the education of worthy poor white girls of the South.

I am at the Park Avenue Hotel, and will be here for several weeks; will be glad to call upon any one and give full information.

J. M. SPENCER,
President Sayre College of Lexington,
Ky.

Feb 17. 1909

Dr. Wells and Evolution.

RECALL LINCOLN ANECDOTES.

Society of Illinois Women Hold Symposium at the Astor.

Meeting at the Hotel Astor yesterday afternoon, the Society of Illinois Women in New York held a "symposium of anecdote and reminiscence" relative to Abraham Lincoln. Eleven women recalled stories they had heard in childhood from the lips of their parents and grandparents.

Miss Amy Wren, President of the New York Women's Press Club, quoted her mother as saying:

"Lincoln's wife had Southern sympathies. When she came to New York some time after the assassination, she exhibited underwear in tatters to show how ungrateful the Federal Government was toward martyrs and their wives."

Miss Wren told of Lincoln's fondness for children and told how the children of Washington used to cling to his coat when they met him on the street. Mrs. Alfred Lewis said she and her brother were among those children, having lived a short distance from the White House at the time.

Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews's "The Perfect Tribute" was recited by Miss Edith Totten, and Mrs. Thomas Slack, founder of the Society of Illinois Women of New York, read a letter from Lincoln to his wife that has appeared in Carl Sandburg's account of Lincoln's prairie years.

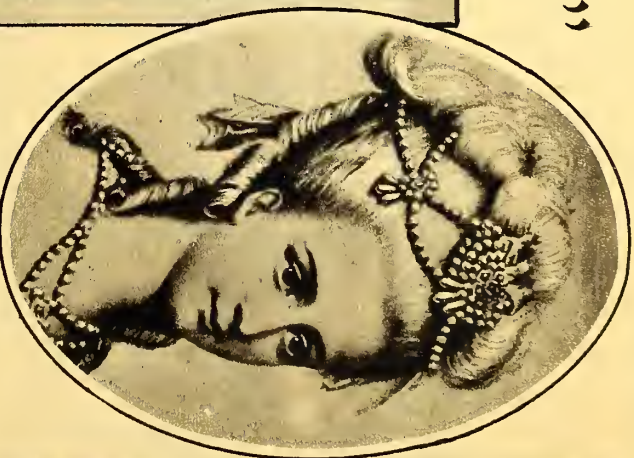
"Woman's Crowning Glory"



"In fourteen hundred and ninety-two Columbus sailed the ocean blue." And his patroness, Queen Isabella, graced the Spanish court in a costume and a coiffure such as these.
(From a painting by Velazquez)



The pettinguer was an important person in the days of Queen Elizabeth (1533-1603). It took him hours to arrange this semi-encrusted "trans-



A countess of Artois, in an ancient and proud province of France. One o s t r i c h was thoroughly stripped and hundreds of shellfish perished to supply her with these plumes and pearls.
(By Keystone View Co.)



A favorite Duthe, pom ribbon-bande hair, setting rect angle.



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"Woman's Crowning Glory"



"In fourteen hundred and thirty-two Columbus sailed the ocean blue. And his patroness, Queen Isabella, traced the Spanish court in a costume and a coiffure such as these."
— From a miniature by Velázquez.



The perwig was an important person in the days of Queen Elizabeth (1533-1603). It took him hours to arrange this em-coiffured "transformation" for the vain Queen. From a painting by Kneller, by Kneller in Dutch, Me & Co.



This elaborate hairdressing of hair and ribbon was worn by Mrs. Alexander Leslie in the period when hoop skirts and off-the-shoulder frocks were the fashion.
— From a painting by Kneller.



Right — Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson, wife of the creator of the "Gibson Girl," and one of the beautiful Langhorne sisters of Virginia, is shown wearing a "Poodle hat."
— (Photograph by Kneller).



Frivolous and wonderful were coiffures in the 18th. Little Russell's golden wig surpassed the ultimate in its profusion of curls and its array of softly undulating surface.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Mrs. Irene Curtis McLaughlin, former dancer who has the credit of having started the bobbed hair craze in America some fifteen years ago.
Left — Made Adams, when the century was young, unforged her erst and did her hair in brown tresses in becoming coils.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



A countess of Artois, in an ancient and proud province of France. One a stiffish was thoroughly striped and hundreds of shalish perished to supply her with these plumes and pearls.
— The Kalendar Year 1700.



A favorite of the old French court, La Dufre, pompadour, curled, feathered, ribbon-banded and jeweled her powdered hair, setting a coiffure plane in just the correct angle.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



A fancy coiffure of the early 18th, Isabella of Savaria, the queen of Charles VI, of France, wore a powdered headpiece draped with pearls.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



In American colonial and revolutionary days Martha Washington wore a cap, daintily frilled with lace and a fichu that fell over her graceful shoulders.
— (From a painting by J. S. Maitland, in Kneller's & Kneller's).



Of course it would take a hand of hair to anchor a hat much as that worn by Elizabeth I's famous "Duchess of Devonshire." Ringlets, and curls, such as these were all the rage in the 17th.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Left — Margaret Fuller Gass (1793-1840), a brilliant woman in advance of her times, displayed feminine coiffure in the strange and a bit of her braided doppel coiffure.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Letitia Elizabeth Landon, English poet and novelist of the early nineteenth century, parted her dark hair smoothly and tied it in a marvelous topknot.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



A queen of world tragedy, Marie Antoinette of France wore a charmingly curled all-over hairdress, softly fringed with ribbon of satin. Curls on the shoulders add a pretty touch.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



When Harriet Lane Johnston was mistress of the white house during the presidency of her uncle, James Buchanan, she wore her hair late in a chignon as depicted.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



When Empress Carlotta reigned with great Maximilian in Mexico, severely was the style in hairdressing, and "rats" were concealed within the puff.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Beatrice Little and her brother (if she has one) could employ the same hair-wear with no trouble at all.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



The windblown style is shown in the hair of Anna Lou, noted coiffure on the "gentlemen's press."
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Modish and extremely long, No. 1000 is a hair in the hair above the head of Ann Harding, beautiful stage star, in the subject's hair.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Left — The pendulum swings back and the Great Gatsby bob brings cheer to the devotees of long hair.
— (From a painting by Kneller).



Florence Nightingale (the "Lady of the Lamp"), famous English war nurse, wore her dark hair parted in the middle and caught back with ribbons and lace.

(Keystone Photo)



Letitia Elizabeth Landon, English poet and novelist of the early nineteenth century, parted her dark hair smoothly and tied it in a marvelous topknot.

(Keystone Photo)



A qu
Antoine
ly curle
ed with
shoulder

Left—When she was "first lady" Mrs. Grover Cleveland helped to establish a conservative form of hair-dressing.

(U. & U. Photo)



Mrs. Irene Castle McLaughlin who has the credit of having hair craze in America some young, undraped her ears and tresses in becoming coils.

(Photo by Sarony)



Fearful and wonderful were coiffures in the gay '90s. Lillian Russell's golden one surpassed the ultimate in its profusion of puffs and its area of softly undulating surface.

This elaborate hairdressing of roses and ribbons was worn by Mrs. Abraham Lincoln in the period when hoop skirts and off-the-shoulder frocks were the fashion.

(U. & U. Photo)

Right—Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson, wife of the creator of the "Gibson Girl," and one of the beautiful Langhorne sisters of Virginia, is shown wearing a "Psyche knot."

(By Underwood & Underwood)



LINCOLN LORE

No. 155

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

March 28, 1932

LINCOLN LORE

BULLETIN OF
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RESEARCH
FOUNDATION



ENDOWED BY
THE LINCOLN
NATIONAL LIFE
INSURANCE
COMPANY

Dr. Louis A. Warren

Editor

MARY TODD LINCOLN CHRONOLOGY

Abraham Lincoln lived with his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, over a period of twenty-three years. One may assume without contradiction that during this period she influenced him more than any other person. This fact makes a study of Mrs. Lincoln's life an important contribution to the understanding of her husband.

Mrs. Abraham Lincoln by Dr. W. A. Evans of Chicago, is an exhaustive study of Mary Todd, beginning with her ancestry and concluding with her death in 1882.

The contents of Dr. Evans' valuable addition to *Lincolniana* can best be visualized by the following chronology which is made available through the kindness of the publisher of the book, Alfred A. Knopf, New York:

1812—November 26, Robert S. Todd married Eliza Parker, Lexington, Kentucky.

1825—July 5, Eliza Parker Todd died.

1826—November 1, Robert S. Todd, Mary's father, married Betsy Humphreys, Frankfort, Kentucky. Mary Todd started school at Ward's, Lexington, Kentucky.

1832—February 29, marriage of Elizabeth Todd, sister of Mary, to Ninian W. Edwards. Mary Todd entered Mentelle's school, Lexington, Kentucky.

1833—Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards moved to Springfield, Illinois.

1837—Mary Todd visited Springfield for three months. Autumn, Mary Todd again in Ward's School, Lexington, Kentucky.

1839—Autumn, Mary Todd, living with Mrs. Edwards in Springfield, met Abraham Lincoln.

1840—Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd engaged to marry.

1841—January, engagement of Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln broken.

1842—November 4, Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd married at the Edward's home. Went to live at the Globe Tavern.

1843—August 1, Robert T. Lincoln born.

1844—The Lincolns lived on Monroe Street. The Lincolns bought the "Lincoln home."

1846—March 10, Edward Baker Lincoln born. Lincoln elected to Congress.

1847—October, the Lincolns visited Lexington en route to Washington.

1848—Spring, Mrs. Lincoln in Lexington; Lincoln in Washington.

1849—Robert S. Todd died. October, the Lincolns in Lexington in connection with lawsuit.

1850—February 1, Edward Baker Lincoln died. Spring, the Lincolns in Lexington. December 21, William Wallace Lincoln born.

1853—April 4, Thomas Lincoln born.

1857—Summer, Mrs. Lincoln traveled to Niagara Falls and New York. September 5-30, second story added to Lincoln house.

1860—May 18, Lincoln nominated for president. November 7, Lincoln elected president.

1861—January 10, Mrs. Lincoln in New York shopping. January 24, Mrs. Lincoln back in Springfield. February 11, Lincoln and his family left Springfield for Washington. February 23, Lincoln arrived in Washington. March 2, Mrs. Lincoln, after stopping in New York, arrived in Washington. Summer, Mrs. Lincoln visited Saratoga, New York, and Long Branch, New Jersey. September 1, Mrs. Lincoln visited Niagara Falls. November, Mrs. Lincoln had returned to the White House from her several trips.

1862—February 20, William W. Lincoln died. During the summer, President and Mrs. Lincoln spent most of the season in the Anderson cottage, Soldiers' Home, Washington. September, Mrs. Lincoln visited New York City, at the Metropolitan Hotel. November 29, Mrs. Lincoln returned from a visit to New England. December 21, Mrs. Lincoln in Philadelphia, Continental Hotel.

1863—April, President and Mrs. Lincoln and Tad visited the Army of the Potomac. July, Mrs. Lincoln thrown from carriage and her head badly hurt. September, Mrs. Lincoln at Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York City. November, creditors of Mrs. Lincoln threatened to sue her. December 3-7, Mrs. Lincoln in New York City, Fifth Avenue Hotel.

1864—April 28, Mrs. Lincoln in New York City, Metropolitan Hotel. June 24, Mrs. Lincoln in Boston. August 31, Mrs. Lincoln in Manchester, Vermont.

1865—January 17, Levi O. Todd died. March 22, President and Mrs. Lincoln visited City Point. April 4, President and Mrs. Lincoln visited Richmond. April 14, President Lincoln assassinated. May 4, President Lincoln buried in Springfield, Illinois. May 22, Mrs. Lincoln and family left Washington for Chicago; they arrived May 24 and went to the Tremont House. May 31, Mrs. Lincoln moved to a Hyde Park boarding-house.

1866—Mrs. Lincoln in Chicago. May 22, Mrs. Lincoln bought and occupied a house on West Washington Street.

1867—Mrs. Lincoln in Chicago. Robert Lincoln in the firm, Scammon and Lincoln; lived with his mother at 375 West Washington Street. April 14,

Mrs. Lincoln in Springfield to visit the Lincoln tomb. May 1 (about), Mrs. Lincoln rented her West Washington Street house and moved to the Clifton House. July, Mrs. Lincoln in Racine, Wisconsin. September 19, Mrs. Lincoln in New York. The proposed auction episode. October 13, Mrs. Lincoln was boarding with D. Cole, at 460 West Washington Street, Chicago. November, Mrs. Lincoln's brother-in-law, Dr. William Wallace, died.

1868—Mrs. Lincoln traveled in New England, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere. In Chicago much of the time, at the Clifton House. July to September, Mrs. Lincoln in Cresson, Pennsylvania. September 24, Robert T. Lincoln married Mary Harlan. Later in the Autumn, Mrs. Lincoln, with Tad, went to Europe.

1869—January 25, Mrs. Lincoln's letter written from Frankfort am Main, Germany, was read to the Senate. December 3, Mrs. Lincoln and Tad in London. December 29, Mrs. Lincoln and Tad in Frankfurt am Main; Tad in school.

1870—February 12, Mrs. Lincoln in Florence, Italy. March 22, Mrs. Lincoln and Tad in Frankfurt am Main; Tad in school. May to August, Mrs. Lincoln and Tad in Germany; Tad in school. May 2, Mrs. Lincoln's pension bill passed the House. May 19, Mrs. Lincoln visited Tad in school at Ober Ursel, near Frankfurt.

1871—Robert Lincoln and family on Wabash Avenue in Chicago; Tad's illness continued. June, Mrs. Lincoln and Tad at the Clifton House; Tad seriously ill. July 15, Tad died at the Clifton House; funeral from Robert's home on Wabash Avenue; burial in Springfield.

1874—Mrs. Lincoln's name reappeared in the Lakeside Directory of Chicago; address, Grand Central Hotel. Summer, Mrs. Lincoln in Waukesha, Wisconsin, drinking the waters for her health. Winter, Mrs. Lincoln in Florida.

1875—April, Mrs. Lincoln at the Grand Pacific Hotel, Chicago. May 19, Mrs. Lincoln tried for sanity. May 20-September 10, in Bellevue Place Sanatorium, Batavia, Illinois; thereafter with Mrs. N. W. Edwards, Springfield.

1876—In Springfield with Mrs. Edwards.

1877—April 12, in Pau, France. Went to Marseilles and Naples. April 22, in Sorrento.

1878—July 4, in Pau, France.

1879—December, in Europe, mostly in Pau. Injured by fall.

1880—October, reached America.

1881—Autumn, went to New York to be treated by Dr. Lewis A. Sayre.

1882—January 16, pension increased to \$5,000 a year by Congress which also voted her \$15,000 in addition. March, returned to Springfield. Summer, suffered from boils; refused to go to seashore. July 16, died in Springfield. Buried in the Lincoln tomb.

History Unkind to Mary Lincoln

J. P. G. IN KANSAS CITY STAR

Time, says Shakespeare's Ulysses to the sulking Achilles, hath a wallet at his back wherein he puts aims for oblivion. In America some goodly compartments of the wallet must have been set aside for vice-presidents and Presidents' wives. Rare is the memory that can recall the roster of vice-presidents, even of our own generation. Aside from the first First Lady of the Land, Martha Washington, the best beloved, few matrons of the White House ever achieved a celebrity that won for them any enduring place in the galleries of posterity.

Abigail Adams and Dolly Madison may, perhaps, be noted as exceptions to the general rule, but for the most part, the wives of our Presidents—especially in the interval between the '20s and the '60s—impressed their personalities but feebly upon the history of their times. But when the storm clouds of the Civil War broke and Abraham Lincoln, the unknown, moved into the White House with his temperamental helpmate, Mary Todd Lincoln, there arrived one President's wife to whom oblivion would have been a mercy. History has not been kind to her. The biographers of Lincoln have turned aside to picture her in invidious colorings. Calumny followed her in the White House and bitter words in the after years. Shrew, termagant, provincial, nagging and unsympathetic wife of a great man, are some of the mildest terms that have been applied to her.

A recent biographer, Dr. W. E. Evans, editor and psychiatrist, has just completed an intensive research into the facts of Mrs. Lincoln's life, coupled with a psychoanalytical study of her personality, undertaken with a view of vindicating her memory, as far as possible. Even at least, "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" that pursued her and the slanderous myths of which she was the victim. This does not mean that the figure of Mrs. Lincoln emerges from this biographical investigation short of her temperamental shortcomings or clothed with virtues that she did not possess. For the tragedies that shadowed her life and the mental blight that darkened her later years, much that was subject of early criticism and condemnation might have been forgiven and forgotten.

A Life of Trouble

The comment of a kindly librarian to the biographer in search of documentary material for his life of Mrs. Lincoln would perhaps express a popular verdict: "The poor woman lived a life of trouble. She was censured bitterly. She had many enemies. Her reputation is an unhappy one. She died in trouble. She was buried in peace. Why dig her up? Why not let the world forget?" But historical curiosity is unappeasable. So much that was unfavorable in Mrs. Lincoln's personality and actions was interwoven with the life of her husband—and often maliciously interwoven—that if the record should be allowed to stand as in the biographies of Herndon and

the tradition that there was a preliminary wedding ceremony arranged to Mary Todd at which Lincoln, the prospective and reluctant groom, failed to appear.

Heredity Didn't Explain

Much time, space and skill in research are devoted by this defender of Mrs. Lincoln's memory to her family tree on both the maternal and the paternal side in the hope of finding some ancestral basis to account for the peculiarities of her temperament. The Todd-Parker-Porter lines are explored to their utmost ramifications. With the exception of a steady drinker here and there and a choleric judge or colonel in sporadic evidence along the line, there appears little foundation for an assumption that inherited characteristics were very largely responsible for Mrs. Lincoln's irregular actions or deviations from the normal code of life. The utmost that the ancestral influence seems to have explained is a certain incompatibility of temperament between the proud and ambitious Mary Todd and the plain and plodding Abraham Lincoln. In the Todd-Parker-Porter lines there were many ancestors of quality and station—judges, generals, politically minded men, and many dominating personalities. The son of Tom Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, reared in the wilderness, was considered of rather "common stock." It is not hard to understand, without the suggestion of ancestral abnormalities, that frictions in the household must necessarily have resulted from the mere contacts of the resultant "breeding" indicated by the respective ancestral strains.

To a woman of Mary Todd's high-strung, proud, ambitious and rather impatient disposition, the ways of the lanky and careless Abe were doubtless often a severe trial. It is said that one of her early grievances against him was that he insisted on answering the door bell personally when neighbors came to visit. No doubt Lincoln performed that mental ceremony in his shirt sleeves and carpet slippers. He was also milking the cow and currying the family horse, while he was reading his law and plodding along on the path to fame, and while Mrs. Lincoln was building castles about the future President and a brilliant national career for herself. In fact, even after his nomination, Lincoln did not desert the cow nor the horse and probably continued to tend to the door bell. It needs no psychopathic insight to reach the conclusion that domestic explosions must have been frequent in the Springfield household.

Not An Ignorant Woman

For a long time during Mrs. Lincoln's life and even after her death there was afloat a popular tradition that she was an ignorant woman—a woman of vulgar habits and coarse breeding. Nothing

could have been farther from the truth. Whatever may have been her social faux pas or however extraordinary her indiscretions or behavior, they were never the results of lack of breeding or education. Mary Todd was born in Lexington, Ky., December 13, 1818, the third daughter and the fourth child of a large family. Her father and mother were well to do Kentuckians, living in a home well supplied with servants and pioneer luxuries. She began her schooling in a preparatory academy. She later attended a boarding school for girls kept by a Madame Mentelle, where the "graces" and the languages were taught. From this institution she was graduated when she was 19 and later took a post-graduate course at Ward's academy. She was only a year out of school when she met Abraham Lincoln, in 1840, then a struggling lawyer. They were married in 1842. At Madame Mentelle's Mary Todd had learned to read and speak French fluently and acquired the rudiments of a genteel education. She was an apt pupil. And her social connections, in her Kentucky days, were of the best—the Todds were "quality."

When Mrs. Lincoln left Springfield for Washington, she had gained everything in life her ambitious heart had been set upon. From this time on her dream began to fade. It was a time of tragedies, of nerve-wrecking excitements, of hatreds and suspicions that unbalanced stronger minds than Mrs. Lincoln possessed. Eager to help her husband in politics, she made bitter enemies by her maladroitness. Society turned a cold shoulder toward her. Political hatreds encompassed her with calumnies and slanders. Death once more took toll of her family—the beloved Willie died in 1862 and she plunged again into excessive mourning.

Harsh Criticism Hurt

People began to notice a strangeness in her actions and harsh criticisms were leveled against her. Engrossed with the exigencies of war, Lincoln had little time to devote to his family. Solitary, beset with enemies, led about and grief stricken, it was small wonder that a time came when something broke in Mrs. Lincoln's brain and the period of irresponsibility began. Just when this happened, even the psychiatrists were unable to determine. It was probably a progressive process, hastened by her sudden eminence, her unfriendly surroundings, her proud detachment and the tragedies of war.

Signs of her mental aberration were discernible early in Lincoln's first term. She had a restless habit of wandering away, on shopping tours and a passion for buying expensive dresses, lace and jewelry. In the stores of New York she ran bills to the extent of some \$70,000—accounts of which the trusting President knew nothing. There were explosive scenes with guests in the drawing rooms and on visits to the Army headquarters and battlefields. Then came the final blow that no doubt shattered the last

With the Poets

Remember

Incidents in the Life of Mary Lincoln

By Carlos W. Goltz

765

AMERICAN AUTOGRAPH SHOP.

112. (LINCOLN). Incidents in the Life of Mary Todd Lincoln. By Carlos W. Goltz, 12mo, orig. wrappers, facsimiles (Mrs. Lincoln's letter). Privately printed for a few friends Sioux City, Iowa, 1928. VERY INTERESTING. 4.50.

Julien with Mrs. Goltz - Substant.

The Star 2/2/25

Haskin's Answers To Readers' Questions

By Frederic J. Haskin.

A reader can get the answer to any question of fact by writing The Evening Star Information Bureau, Frederic J. Haskin, director, Washington, D. C. Please inclose stamp for reply.

Q. What color were the hair and eyes of Mrs. Lincoln?—R. L. G.

A. Her hair was rich, dark brown; her eyes were bluish gray. Dr. W. E. Barton, in his "Life of Abraham Lincoln," says that Mrs. Lincoln was "a brunette with rosy cheeks."

WILLIAM H. TOWNSEND

*Mary Ann Todd*¹

ON DECEMBER 6, 1817, two popular veterans of the War of 1812, Robert S. Todd, of Captain Hart's infantry, and Sergeant Bird Smith, of Captain Trotter's cavalry, announced their partnership in an "Extensive Grocery Establishment," advantageously located on Cheapside. One of the firm, according to the *Gazette*, would attend "foreign markets by which they will be enabled to supply their customers with every article in their line, on better terms and of better quality—indeed with any articles, such as fruits, *et cetera* that heretofore could not be procured."² For the next several years, the advertisements of Smith and Todd regularly appear in the public prints, always listing a full line of high-grade groceries and the choicest, rarest wines, spirits, brandy, gin, and whisky.

Robert S. Todd was now one of the most enterprising and promising young businessmen of Lexington, deeply interested, as were his forebears, in political and civic affairs. He had been chosen clerk of the Kentucky House of Representatives with little or no opposition for two sessions,³ and was shortly to take his seat as a member of the Fayette County Court, a position of some distinction in the community.⁴ Moreover, Todd was the father of a growing family, which consisted of two daughters, Elizabeth and Frances, and a son named Levi for his grandfather. On December 13, 1818, a third daughter arrived at the Short Street residence, and the newcomer was given the name of Mary Ann, for Mrs. Todd's only sister.⁵

Two years later, another son, Robert Parker, was born, but in the middle of his second summer he died, and Nelson, the old body servant, hitched up the family barouche and, according to a quaint custom of the town, delivered

¹ From *Lincoln and His Wife's Home Town*. Copyright, 1929. Reprinted by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

² *Kentucky Gazette*, December 13, 1817. [*orig.*]

³ Todd's clerical experience, fine intellect and genial personality peculiarly fitted him for his duties in the House of Representatives, which he performed with great fidelity for nearly a quarter of a century. [*orig.*]

⁴ Order Book 4, p. 426, Fayette County clerk's office. [*orig.*]

⁵ Robert Parker's children were: Mary, Ann, Eliza, James P., Robert C., John and Andrew. See Todd's heirs *vs.* Parker's heirs; File 559, Fayette Circuit Court. In after years, Mary seldom used her middle name except when signed to formal documents. See Elizabeth L. Todd *et al.*, to Benjamin F. Edge, June 18, 1856; Deed Book 32, p. 409, Fayette County clerk's office. Todd's heirs *vs.* Todd's admx.; File 1389, Fayette Circuit Court. [*orig.*]

at the doors of his master's friends black-bordered "funeral tickets," which read:

Yourself and family are invited to attend the funeral of Robert P. Todd, infant son of Mr. R. S. Todd, from his residence on Short Street, this evening, at 5 o'clock. July 22, 1822.⁶

Little Mary Ann was delighted when a baby sister came in 1824. All the other Todd children were old enough to go to school and, during their absence, time hung heavily on Mary's hands until the arrival of Ann Maria.⁷ And now, with two "Anns" in the family, Mary's middle name was dropped from ordinary use to avoid confusion.

Lexington celebrated the Fourth of July, 1825, with much patriotic fervor. Sunrise was ushered in by the ringing of church bells, and a national salute from Captain Pike's company of Artillery Cadets. At 4 A. M. the cadets appeared in the streets as infantry, and "after performing evolutions" marched to the lodgings of the city's holiday guest, Major-General Winfield Scott, and fired a salute.

Several barbecues were held in the country. At Mr. Cornett's Eagle Tavern, where General Scott, Captain Galt, his aide, and Henry Clay, the new Secretary of State, dined, some eighteen good stiff "Kentucky Bourbon" toasts were drunk, among them being:

"The Memory of Washington."

"The Union," the paladium of our political safety and prosperity."

"Henry Clay, Secretary of State: The man resolved and sacred to his trust, inflexible to ill, and obstinately just."

"Our distinguished guest, General Winfield Scott."

"The Ladies of the Western Country—the rose is not less lovely, nor its fragrance less delightful, because it blossoms in the Wilderness."

In the afternoon, Mr. Clay and General Scott joined a large company of ladies and gentlemen at Captain Fowler's Garden, where there was dancing until "a late hour in the evening."⁸

But in the midst of all this celebration, the home of Robert S. Todd was dark and quiet. Another boy had just been born to Eliza Todd, and death was hovering near the mother. All that day Mary and the other children anxiously watched the house with its closed shutters from their Grandmother Parker's side porch across the lawn. Old Nelson trudged in and out with packages from Graves' drug store. At bedtime, the one-horse gigs of Dr. Ben Dudley and Dr. Elisha Warfield still stood in front of the door, but next morning the doctors were gone and pillowcases hung on the clothesline in the back yard. On the following day the funeral tickets read:

⁶ *Duff Collection of Obituaries*, Lexington Public Library. [orig.]

⁷ Ann Maria was named for one of Robert S. Todd's sisters. Thomas M. Green. *Historic Families of Kentucky*, Robert Clarke and Company, Cincinnati, 1889, p. 213. [orig.]

⁸ *Kentucky Reporter*, July 4, 1825; July 11, 1825. [orig.]

Yourself and family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral of Mrs. Eliza P., Consort of Robert S. Todd, Esq., from his residence on Short Street, this Evening at 4 o'clock, July 6, 1825.⁹

Thus, at thirty-four years of age, Robert S. Todd was a widower with six small children, the last one, George Rogers Clark, only a few days old. Fortunately, however, he was able to keep his family intact. Ann Maria, his unmarried sister, came to live with them, and this capable young woman cheerfully assumed the management of the household and the care of her brother's motherless children. The faithful Todd slaves, brought up in the family, made the task easier than it would have been otherwise. Jane Saunders was the housekeeper; Chaney, the cook; Nelson, the body servant and coachman, also served the diningroom and did the marketing, while old "Mammy Sally," with the young nurse, Judy, took excellent care of the little Todds.

In January, 1826, the General Assembly convened at Frankfort, and Robert S. Todd was again chosen clerk of the Lower House. It was not long before the gay social life of the capital brought him an introduction to Miss Elizabeth Humphreys, a charming, highly cultured young woman, a member of one of the oldest and most prominent Kentucky families. Two of her uncles, Preston Brown and Samuel Brown, earliest professor of medicine at Transylvania, were physicians widely known throughout the West. Another uncle, John Brown, had been Kentucky's first United States senator, while still another uncle, James Brown, brother-in-law of Mrs. Henry Clay, had represented Louisiana in the Senate, and was later Minister to France.

In a few months, Robert S. Todd was ardently seeking the hand of pretty Betsy Humphreys, although the numerous relatives of his first wife did not look with favor upon the courtship. This opposition to his remarriage is reflected in one of his letters to Miss Humphreys, who was then visiting in New Orleans:

You have no doubt observed with what avidity and eagerness an occasion of this kind is seized hold of for the purpose of detraction and to gratify personal feelings of ill-will and indeed oftentimes how much mischief is done without any bad motive. May I be permitted to put you on your guard against persons of this description. Not that I would wish to stifle fair enquiry, for I feel in the review of my past life a consciousness that such would not materially affect me in your estimation, although there are many things which I have done and said, I would wish had never been done—and such I presume is the case of every one disposed to be honest with himself. . . . Wealth is sometimes the high road to distinction & honors, but rarely to real happiness; a competency is always necessary for our comfort & happiness in every situation. Did I not believe that I could offer you the latter, I should never have proposed a change of the situation where you now enjoy it—and to effect that object, I have always felt it a duty which I owe to those entrusted to my care and protection, to use the necessary exertion. I am in that situation which the good old book describes as the most desirable: "Not so poor as to be compelled

⁹ *Duff Collection of Obituaries*, Lexington Public Library. [orig.]

to beg my bread nor so rich as to forget my maker," to the latter part of my quotation, I know I have not paid that regard which my duty required.¹⁰

By late October, Robert S. Todd and Betsy Humphreys were engaged, and Todd was writing his fiancée:

I hope you will not consider me importunate in again urging upon your consideration the subject of my last letter. I am sure if you knew my situation, you would not hesitate to comply with my wishes in fixing on a day for our marriage in this or the early part of the ensuing week.¹¹

This was followed a few days later by another note to Miss Humphreys, which reads:

Lexington, Oct. 25, 1826.

Dear Betsy:

I received your kind letter of Monday, for which I return you my sincere acknowledgements. Availing myself of the privilege which it seems to give, I hasten to inform you that I will be down on Wednesday next, the 1st day of November. Mr. Crittenden, if unmarried, will be my only attendant. I intend to write to him by this mail. It is now late, & I bid you a pleasant good night. Believe me Dear Betsy, when I subscribe myself

Affectionately yours,
R. S. Todd.¹²

On Wednesday, November 1, 1826, Robert S. Todd and Betsy Humphreys were married at the historic old home of the bride in Frankfort.¹³ Mr. Todd's best man was John J. Crittenden, who, in spite of his youth, had already been Speaker of the Kentucky House of Representatives, had served his state in the United States Senate, was later to be twice Attorney-General of the United States, Governor of Kentucky, and again Senator.¹⁴

The Widow Parker had been much opposed to the remarriage of her son-in-law, and she never became fully reconciled to the second Mrs. Todd. The situation, therefore, which immediately confronted the young stepmother was not an easy one. Yet she assumed the duties of her new household with poise, tact, patience and a deep interest in the welfare, education and training of her six stepchildren. Mary Todd, as Mrs. Todd soon discovered, was a sprightly, but curiously complex little creature, high-strung, headstrong, precocious, warm-hearted, sympathetic and generous—a mischievous tomboy, who, while leading her older brother, Levi, a merry chase, was also passionately fond of

¹⁰ Todd to Humphreys, February 15, 1826. Original in possession of Emilie Todd Helm. [orig.]

¹¹ Todd to Humphreys, October 23, 1826. Original in possession of Emilie Todd Helm. [orig.]

¹² Todd to Humphreys, October 25, 1826. Original in possession of Emilie Todd Helm. [orig.]

¹³ *Kentucky Gazette*, November 10, 1826. [orig.]

¹⁴ As Todd's last letter implied Crittenden's marriage was also impending, and two weeks later, on November 15, 1826, he married Betsy Humphreys' intimate friend Mariah K. Todd, also of Frankfort, Mrs. Chapman Coleman, *The Life of John J. Crittenden*, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1871, p. 21. [orig.]

birds, flowers, pretty dresses, and other dainty things that delight the feminine heart.

Mary was about eight years old when she entered the Academy of Dr. John Ward, located in a large, two-story building on the southeast corner of Market and Second Streets.¹⁵ Dr. Ward, an Episcopal minister, and the rector of Christ Church, was a native of Connecticut who had been bishop of North Carolina before coming to Kentucky in search of health. Kindly, scholarly, benevolent, he was, nevertheless, a strict disciplinarian. Far in advance of his time, he believed in co-education, and his school numbered about one hundred twenty boys and girls from the best families in Lexington.

Early morning recitation was a peculiar regulation of Dr. Ward's Academy, and during the summer months the history class assembled at five o'clock. One morning the new night watchman, a recent stalwart immigrant from the Emerald Isle, observed a young lady hurrying up Second Street just before daybreak, with a bundle under her arm. Thinking that he had discovered an elopement, the vigilant watchman gave chase which ended only when the breathless "scholar," much to the merriment of the other pupils and the annoyance of Dr. Ward, burst into the schoolroom hotly pursued by Mr. Flannigan, club in hand.¹⁶

Mary Todd's cousin, Elizabeth Humphreys, a member of the Todd household, has left vivid reminiscences of Dr. Ward and Mary's early school days:

His requirements and rules were very strict and woe to her who did not conform to the letter. Mary accepted the conditions cheerfully, even eagerly, and never came under his censure. Mr. Ward required his pupils to recite some of their lessons before breakfast. On bright summer mornings this was no hardship, and Mary skipped blithely to her recitations, but she never murmured when conditions were not so pleasant. When she had to get up out of her warm bed and dress by candlelight, she smiled and trudged sturdily through snow and sleet. . . . Mary was far in advance over girls of her age in education. She had a retentive memory and a mind that enabled her to grasp and thoroughly understand the lessons she was required to learn. It was a hard task but long before I was through mine she had finished hers and was plying her knitting needles. We were required to knit ten rounds of socks every evening.¹⁷

Her cousin further states that "Mary even as a schoolgirl in her gingham dresses was certainly very pretty. She had clear blue eyes, long lashes, light brown hair with a glint of bronze, and a lovely complexion. Her figure was beautiful and no old master ever modeled a more perfect arm and hand."¹⁸

But these days of early girlhood were far from a mere routine of tasks and recitations. Mary's uncle, Reverend Robert Stuart, a professor of languages

¹⁵ John Ward, etc., to John S. Snead, Trustee; Deed Book 10, p. 446, Fayette County clerk's office. [orig.]

¹⁶ See monograph entitled: *Christ Church Cathedral*, p. 28, Lexington Public Library. [orig.]

¹⁷ MSS. *Recollections of Elizabeth Humphreys Norris*, in possession of Emilie Todd Helm. [orig.]

¹⁸ *Ibid.* [orig.]

at Transylvania and a noted Presbyterian minister, lived a few miles from Lexington on the Richmond Pike, and here Mary spent many happy days: horseback rides down the shady winding lanes, picnics with the Stuart children under the majestic trees of near-by woodlands, nutting expeditions in autumn with excursions into dense thickets in search of wild grapes and the luscious papaw, hilarious sleigh rides in winter, with games, stories, and apple roastings in the evenings on the broad hearth of the giant fireplace that snapped and roared with seasoned hickory wood.¹⁹

In 1832, Robert S. Todd purchased a new residence on Main Street just two blocks from his Short Street house.²⁰ The second children were coming on and it was necessary to remove to a more spacious dwelling. One event, however, in which Mary took a delighted interest, occurred before she left the old home. Her oldest sister, Elizabeth, was married on February 18, 1832, to Ninian W. Edwards, son of Governor Edwards of Illinois, then a junior at Transylvania, and Elizabeth's uncle, Dr. Stuart, was officiating minister.²¹

The new home on Main Street was a roomy brick house with double parlors, a wide hall in the center, and a long ell. The grounds of the rear lawn were ample for coach house, stable, and servants' quarters. The side lawn was a beautiful flower garden with a white gravel walk winding through the clipped blue grass to the conservatory, and through its lower edge ran a clear, gentle little stream, the "town fork" of Elkhorn Creek, where the Todd children waded and chased the minnows that scurried across the smooth limestone bottom.

At fourteen years of age, Mary Todd finished the preparatory course at Dr. Ward's and was ready to enter the select boarding school of Madame Victorie Charlotte LeClere Mentelle. Madame Mentelle and her husband, Monsieur Augustus Waldemare Mentelle, were French gentlefolk of culture and high education. Both were born in Paris: Madame, the only child of a French physician; Monsieur, the son of a professor in the National and Royal Academy, who was also "histographer" to the king. Shortly after their marriage in 1792, the young couple had fled from the terrors of the Revolution to America, finally reaching Lexington in 1798.²² For several years following their arrival, the Mentelles taught a mixed class in French, and gave lessons in dancing.²³ Then they established a boarding school for girls on a rolling

¹⁹ Katherine Helm, *Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1928, p. 31. [orig.]

²⁰ William T. Smith, Com'r to R. S. Todd, May 7, 1832; Deed Book 8, p. 133, Fayette County clerk's office. [orig.]

²¹ License Index I, p. 93, Fayette County clerk's office. N. W. Edwards graduated from Transylvania, May 1, 1833. Trustees' Book, I, p. 281. [orig.]

²² See obituary of Madame Mentelle, *Kentucky Statesman*, September 14, 1860. [orig.]

²³ "The subscriber, encouraged by a number of respectable persons, has lately removed to Lexington. He proposes with the assistance of his wife to instruct young people of both sexes in the French Language and Dancing. His terms will be moderate and those who entrust him with care of their children may rely on his attention and assiduity. He will commence teaching on the 23rd of this month. Waldemare Mentelle." *Kentucky Gazette*, July 25, 1798. [orig.]

tract of woodland opposite Ashland, on the Richmond Pike, donated by Mary's cousin, Mrs. Russell, a wealthy widow of the town.²⁴

Madame Mentelle was a rather large, handsome woman, an excellent dancer, a finished musician, an accomplished scholar in her native tongue, and Mary Todd undoubtedly acquired from her an intimate knowledge and a deep love of French, but the curriculum was much broader than the mere study of a single language. In fact, the chief purpose of Madame Mentelle was to give her pupils, as she announced through the press, "a truly useful & 'Solid' English Education in all its branches."²⁵

Mary Todd spent four happy years at the institution on the Richmond Pike. Every Monday morning the Todd carriage, driven by Nelson, the dignified coachman, rolled down the long avenue and left Mary on the broad piazza of the low, rambling, ivy-covered structure that sheltered Madame Mentelle's little flock. And then on Friday afternoons Nelson came for her again.

It was not all study at the Mentelle School. This French gentlewoman knew the drudgery of work without play, and how to maintain proper discipline without irksome restrictions. When afternoon classes were over in warm weather the girls strolled arm in arm about the ample grounds, played games or read to one another on the rustic benches under the fine old forest trees. Sometimes they gathered at the big sycamore near the entrance to the grounds to wave a greeting to their friend, Mr. Clay, as he drove to town for his mail. On winter evenings Monsieur Mentelle would take down his violin and Madame who "spared no pains with the graces and manners of young Ladies submitted to her care," instructed the pupils "in the latest and most fashionable Cotillions, Round & Hop Waltzes, Hornpipes, Galopades, Mohawks, Spanish, Scottish, Polish, Tyrolienne dances and the Beautiful Circassian Circle."

When Mary Todd finished boarding school, her father was one of the most prominent and influential citizens in central Kentucky, and no man in the state was more highly respected or better liked than Robert S. Todd. For years he had been a member of the Fayette County Court. Upon the incorporation of the city of Lexington in 1831, he was elected on its first board of council, and on July 13, 1835, the Branch Bank of Kentucky opened its doors with Robert S. Todd as its first president. Under the firm name of Oldham, Todd and Company, he was also engaged in the cotton manufacturing business with

²⁴ After Mrs. Russell married Robert Wickliffe, she and her husband executed a deed to the Mentelles for this tract of "about five acres of land opposite Mr. Clay's," reciting that it had been given to them "many years since by parole & without writing." Wickliffes to W. Mentelle & C. Mentelle, July 5, 1839; Deed Book 16, p. 484, Fayette County clerk's office. [*orig.*]

²⁵ All biographers, including the late Senator Beveridge, have hitherto assumed that the Mentelle institution was exclusively a French school, some stating that "only French was spoken there," but the records show otherwise. "Mrs. Mentelle wants a few more Young Ladies as Scholars. She has hitherto endeavored to give them a truly useful & 'Solid' English Education in all its branches. *French taught if desired.* Boarding, Washing & Tuition \$120.00 per year, paid quarterly in advance. 1 1/2 miles from Lexington on the Richmond Turnpike road." *Lexington Intelligencer*, March 6, 1838. [*orig.*]

a large plant at Sandersville near Lexington, and a wholesale store in town, supplying an extensive trade in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Ohio.

Although high in the councils of the Whig Party in Kentucky, Todd had been for more than twenty years the almost unanimous choice of all political parties for clerk of the Kentucky House of Representatives.²⁶ Now he was urged to become a candidate for lieutenant-governor, and his name was actually presented to the State Convention at Harrodsburg, but withdrawn, at Todd's insistence, by his friend, Richard H. Menifee.

The Todd home, on West Main Street, was noted for its warm hospitality. The gracious Mrs. Todd was a charming hostess with Mary an eager, capable assistant. As was customary in the households of gentlemen of the Blue Grass, the Todd cellar was always well stocked with the finest Kentucky whisky and rare brandies,²⁷ and it was freely conceded among those whose opinions were respected in such matters, that "not even Mr. Clay's 'Charles' could mix a mint julep like Robert Todd's 'Nelson.'" ²⁸

When Henry Clay, Senator Crittenden, their brilliant young protégé, Richard H. Menifee, and other distinguished friends arrived at the Todd home, Nelson knew that a display of his wizardry was expected. And in a little while, the old negro, clad in his blue swallowtail coat with big brass buttons, would appear in the library or the vine-covered house in the garden, carrying a silver tray filled with all the ingredients of his magic concoction.

The making of a julep was a ritual with Nelson, always to be performed with solemn dignity in the presence of thirsty, admiring guests: tender, fragrant mint firmly pressed with the back of a spoon against the glistening inside of a sterling goblet; the bruised leaves gently removed and the cup half filled with cracked ice; mellow Bourbon, aged in oaken staves, bubbling from a brown jigger, percolated through the sparkling cubes and slivers; in another receptacle, granulated sugar slowly stirred into chilled limestone water to a silvery mixture as smooth as some rare Egyptian oil was poured on top of the ice; then while beads of moisture gathered on the burnished exterior of the goblet, old Nelson garnished the frosted brim with choicest sprigs of mint and presented the tall cup, with a courtly bow, to the nearest guest.

A Lexington visitor, the editor of the *Western Monthly*, near the close of Mary Todd's school days wrote:

The appearance of Lexington is strikingly agreeable. It does not present the crowded streets, the noise, and the appearance of business of many of our Western towns, but seems rather to be the residence of persons in easy circumstances. The buildings are constructed for comfort, rather than show, and while few of them

²⁶ Todd served as clerk from December 5, 1814, to December 28, 1835. *Journal, House of Representatives*. Session 1835-1836. [orig.]

²⁷ Todd purchased his liquor sometimes by the quart, but usually in case lots or by the barrel. See Robt. S. Todd's accounts with Robert Fleming, Walker Kidd, Dudley and Cartv, Swift and Robbins, E. A. Tilford and Co., from 1827 to 1849. Also Deposition of William Leavy; filed in the settlement of the Todd estate: File 1389, Fayette Circuit Court. [orig.]

²⁸ "John Jordan Crittenden," C. M. Clay in *Lexington Daily Press*, November 14, 1871. [orig.]

exhibit on the exterior much architectural taste, they are usually well-furnished and commodious within. But that which gives a rural appearance, and a delightful air of elegance to this town, is the number of trees and shrubs which surround the houses and relieve the eye from the monotonous glare of brick and paint, so oppressive to the sight in many of our cities. The proportion of houses, which appear from their size and their decorations to be dwellings of the wealthy and highly cultivated, is much greater than is usual, and impresses at once the idea that Lexington embraces a large number of those whose circumstances enable them to enjoy the luxury of life, and whose education leads them to the enjoyment of refined and rational pleasures.

We do not behold here those interminable rows of fine houses, those masses of new brick and mortar and that profusion of exterior ornament, which, in some of our cities, indicate their rapid prosperity, and show the ostentation of newly acquired wealth. There is nothing of the bustle and noise and squeeze of Louisville, nor anything resembling the compact squares and busy crowds of Cincinnati, but we see quiet streets, shaded by long rows of locusts; old mansions, surrounded by venerable trees and modern edifices of unostentatious beauty, embowered in shrubbery.

Yet there is a good deal of business done, and although it is not of the character to attract the attention of a stranger, a little close observation produces the conviction that Lexington is the center of a community of great wealth and of much productive industry, and the scene of large pecuniary transactions. Perhaps the circumstance about which a stranger soonest remarks is the number of pleasure carriages which are seen dashing along the streets: gigs, barouches, coaches, vehicles of all sorts and sizes rattle about from morning till night but are particularly numerous in the cool of the afternoon, and they give to this place an appearance of great gaiety.²⁹

Although Lexington by this time, as indicated, had fallen far behind Louisville and Cincinnati in commercial activity, she had steadfastly maintained her position as the center of education. Such institutions as Transylvania University; Lexington Female Seminary; Dr. Ward's Academy; Mr. Maguire's Classical, Scientific, and English School for Male and Female Students; Madame Mentelle's Boarding School for Girls; VanDoren's Institute for Lads and Young Gentlemen; the Protestant Boarding School for Young Ladies; Mrs. George P. Richardson's School for Little Misses; Cabell's Dancing School, and Madame Blaique's Dancing Academy were all located within the limits of the town or its environs.

Lexington was also the social center of the state, and from June to September the taverns, boarding houses and private residences were crowded with guests from many states farther south who came to spend the summer in the Blue Grass. Thus the town had incurred the envy of her less popular neighbors, and it was believed in many quarters that the women of the Blue Grass were vain, haughty creatures who looked with disdain upon those not fortunate enough to have been born in or near the "Athens of the West." Yet, young James Speed of Louisville, later Attorney-General in the Cabinet of Abraham

²⁹ Reprinted in *Lexington Intelligencer*, October 24, 1834, from the *Western Monthly Magazine*. [orig.]

Lincoln, did not find this true of local society when he came to Lexington to enter Transylvania University. "Much better pleased in every respect than I anticipated," he wrote back home, "and especially with the ladies of Lexington. Tell my sisters of this and tell them that all they hear there of their stiffness is altogether a bugbear."³⁰

In 1836, Frances Todd went to live with her sister, Elizabeth Edwards, in Springfield, Illinois, and her departure left Mary the oldest daughter at home. She was then eighteen years old, with a plump graceful figure, though below medium height; mischievous, long-lashed blue eyes, under delicately arched brows, a broad smooth forehead, straight nose, and a rather broad expressive mouth that broke dimples in her cheeks when she smiled.³¹ Brilliant, vivacious, impulsive, she possessed a charming personality marred only by a transient hauteur of manner and a caustic, devastating wit that cut like the sting of a hornet.

It was a wholesome, fun-loving group of young folk that gave spice and gaiety to the staid old town during the few remaining years that Mary made her home in Lexington. Her most intimate friends were girls somewhat older than she: Margaret and Mary Wickliffe, daughters of Robert Wickliffe of the Lexington bar, one of the largest slaveholders in the state; Isabella Bodley; Margaret Stuart, her cousin, sister of John T. Stuart, a rising young lawyer of Springfield, Illinois; Catherine Cordelia Trotter; Sarah Shelby, and the daughters of Dr. Warfield, Ann, Caroline and Julia.

These fair young creatures were, of course, not lacking in the most handsome and eligible beaux. Gallant and romantic, most of them members of one of the four local military companies, accomplished in the exercises of the broadsword and the rapier, expert marksmen with both pistol and rifle—still the young men of Mary's acquaintance seemed not to attract her, and there is not even a tradition that her heart ever gave the faintest little flutter in the presence of any of these scions of the old, aristocratic Blue Grass families.

Mary's favorite amusement was dancing, and the ballrooms of Mathurin Giron were the most fashionable of resorts for such entertainment in Kentucky.³² Monsieur Giron, a unique character of the town, had his famous establishment on Mill Street in a quaint, two-story brick building with Tuscan pilasters which supported a balcony of iron lace along the front of the upper story. A confectionery occupied the first floor, where Monsieur's Swiss cook, Dominique Ritter, produced from the mysterious depths of his ovens marvelous creations in pastry, ripe fruitcakes, tall pyramids of meringues, and macaroons draped in filmy, snow-white sugar webbing. Here was made the mammoth "casellated" cake with the Stars and Stripes gloriously etched upon its sloping sides in red, white, and blue, which the citizens of Lexington

³⁰ April 9, 1831; James Speed, *James Speed, a Personality*, John P. Morton and Company, Louisville, 1914, p. 9. [orig.]

³¹ Helm, *op. cit.*, p. 73. [orig.]

³² "Monsieur Giron's splendid saloon is attended by the wealthy and fashionable citizens." Maccabe's *Directory of Lexington*, 1838-1839. [orig.]

presented to Marquis de Lafayette on his visit to Kentucky in 1825. On the second floor, separated by a wide hall, were the ballrooms with great paneled folding doors of polished cherry, opening to the high frescoed ceiling. In each room were vast fireplaces with mantelpieces of the same exquisite wood supported by graceful columns.³³

Little Monsieur Giron, fastidiously dressed, hardly more than five feet in height, and almost as broad as he was tall, with his round, smoothly shaved face, and his cordial, kindly manner, had been Mary Todd's friend since her childhood. The confectionery was just around the corner from her father's store and only a short distance from Dr. Ward's Academy. The Frenchman had been attracted by the little girl's perfect ease of manner and utter lack of self-consciousness in the presence of adults, and amused by her then quite obvious gift of sparkling repartee. Mary would frequently drop in on her way home from school or as she went to and from the store on Main Street, and many were the spiced buns and hot ginger cakes that he had slipped into her lunch basket in the course of their conversations.³⁴

Mary, now grown to womanhood, still occupied a niche all her own in the large heart of Monsieur Giron. Their mutual love for the Gallic language was in itself an enduring bond between them. At the brilliant suppers and balls that she attended, Monsieur hovered about Mary and her friends, voicing solicitude for their comfort and pleasure in his soft, piquant, broken English, and when she addressed him in his native tongue, his dark eyes glowed with ecstasy.³⁵

In the summer of 1837, Mary Todd went to visit her sisters, Elizabeth and Frances, in Illinois. She had other relatives there also: an uncle, Dr. John Todd, and her three lawyer cousins: John T. Stuart, John J. Hardin and Stephen T. Logan. The visitor from the Blue Grass had not been long in Springfield when she began to hear about Stuart's new law partner. His name was Abraham Lincoln. Both Stuart and Hardin had served with him in the Black Hawk War. He and her brother-in-law, Ninian Edwards, had been members of the celebrated "Long Nine," all over six feet in height, from Sangamon County in the Legislature at Vandalia.

Lincoln, she learned, was a newcomer in Springfield from a village on the Sangamon River called New Salem and had only recently been admitted to the bar. According to his friends, he was a man of strange contradictions: fond of the society of women, but shy in their presence; subject to fits of depression, yet a storyteller whose humor was irresistible; a shrewd, wily politician, but a man of rugged honesty and unswerving integrity; ungainly in personal appearance, though possessed of a simple, natural grace of manner, with a face homely to a marked degree in repose, but singularly charming when animated; a man who would fritter away hours in veritable nonsense with shal-

³³ "The Confectionery of Monsieur Giron," William D. Doty, *Transylvanian*, April, 1907. [orig.]

³⁴ Statement of Dr. A. T. Parker to the author, February 3, 1919. [orig.]

³⁵ Helm, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44. [orig.]

low, sometimes tipsy companions, yet a profound, logical thinker, a persuasive stump speaker, a dangerous adversary in rough and tumble debate. Mary Todd's curiosity must have been piqued at these queer descriptions of a most unusual man, but she did not meet him once during her three-month visit in Springfield. Her time was quite fully occupied with balls, levees and receptions given in her honor by relatives and friends, and the weeks passed swiftly.

As for Lincoln, he was then passing through the loneliest period of his life. Except for a few political acquaintances and one or two warm friends, he was almost a penniless stranger in the bustling capital of that new, growing country. But even so, he was not by any means idle. Besides a droll, halfhearted courtship with portly Mary Owens, he was also deeply absorbed in his first important lawsuit—a bitter altercation with General James Adams, a prominent citizen and lawyer of the local bar. Lincoln's client, a poor widow, had been, as he boldly charged, defrauded of a valuable tract of land by Adams, who had forged her deceased husband's name to a deed, and it was largely the vigorous and successful prosecution of this case that brought Lincoln shortly into prominence.³⁶

Early in the year following Mary Todd's return from Springfield, an event occurred in Washington which created great excitement throughout the country, particularly in Lexington, and was of special concern to the family of Robert S. Todd inasmuch as it involved three most intimate friends. On February 20, 1838, Congressman Jonathan Cilley, of Maine, made certain derogatory remarks, in the House of Representatives, concerning Colonel James Watson Webb, editor of the *New York Courier*. On the same day, Congressman William J. Graves, of Kentucky, bore a note to Mr. Cilley from Colonel Webb which he declined to receive on the ground that Webb was not a gentleman. Under the "code," this was a personal insult to the bearer of the communication, and Mr. Graves immediately consulted his friends, Mr. Clay and Mr. Crittenden, the two Kentucky senators, and young Richard H. Menifee, Congressman from the Lexington district.

After a brief consultation, Clay wrote a challenge from Graves which was delivered to Mr. Cilley by Congressman Henry A. Wise, of Virginia. The challenge was promptly accepted, and Mr. Cilley, being an expert marksman, selected rifles as the weapons at a distance of eighty yards. Wise objected to this weapon as "unusual, barbarous, and unnecessarily fatal," but Clay ended the discussion with the remark: "Graves is a Kentuckian and can never back from a rifle."

Shortly after three o'clock on the afternoon of February 24, Mr. Graves and Mr. Cilley met in a field near the Anacosta Bridge on the road to Marlborough in Maryland. Cilley's seconds were Mr. Jones, of Wisconsin, Mr. Byrnum, of North Carolina, and Mr. Duncan, of Illinois. Senator Crittenden and Richard H. Menifee, of Kentucky, and Mr. Wise, of Virginia, were seconds for Mr.

³⁶ William H. Townsend, *Lincoln, the Litigant*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1925, p. 71. [orig.]

Graves. The principals took their positions, the word was given, both fired quickly and missed. At the second fire, Graves discharged his rifle accidentally and the ball struck the ground a few feet in front of him. Mr. Cilley again missed, but two bullet holes in the rail fence just behind his adversary, and on a line with the third button on his coat, showed the accuracy of his aim. For the third time the rifles were raised, deliberately aimed. Cilley fired—missed—and an instant later pitched forward on his face, dead, with Graves' bullet through his body.³⁷

No personal encounter between two public men, save only the Burr-Hamilton duel, ever provoked the bitter controversy that followed this tragedy. It was charged that Cilley had been held to account for words spoken in debate. Both senators from Kentucky had aided and abetted the "crime": Clay had written the challenge, Crittenden had furnished the rifle. Both Crittenden and young Menifee had been seconds to the "murder." The Democratic press throughout the country denounced the Kentuckians, who were all Whigs, in scathing terms, while the Whig newspapers stoutly defended them. Even in Kentucky sentiment was divided according to politics, except at Lexington, where it was resolved at a public meeting attended by "many ladies," presided over by Robert S. Todd, that her citizens "irrespective of party, do applaud in the face of the whole world the stand of our Representatives in rendering service to a dauntless fellow Kentuckian when confronted by a hostile Yankee rifle."³⁸

The relations that existed between Mary Todd and her stepmother, particularly during the years just before she went to live in Springfield, and her reasons for leaving home have long been matters of bitter dispute. Only two sources of documentary evidence on these mooted questions from persons then in a position to know now exist. In the papers of the suit brought to settle the estate of Robert S. Todd in 1849, George Todd, Mary's youngest brother, refers to "the malignant and continued attempts on the part of his stepmother, Mrs. E. L. Todd, to poison the mind of his father towards him," and asserts that Robert S. Todd was "mortified that his last child by his first wife should be obliged, like all his first children, to abandon his house by the relentless persecution of a stepmother."³⁹ While a letter, dated "May—, 48," written by Mary Lincoln to her husband who was then in Washington, speaks of "Ma," her stepmother, saying: "She is very obliging and accommodating, but if she thought any of us were on her hands again, I believe she would be worse than ever."⁴⁰

³⁷ *Lexington Intelligencer*, March 6, May 11, et seq., 1838. [orig.]

³⁸ *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, March 8, 1838. Six years later, when Clay was again the Whig candidate for President, his part in the Cilley-Graves duel was widely circulated by scurrilous pamphlets that did much to lose him New England and the election. *Polk Campaign Pamphlet*, Tract 1, "Henry Clay's Duels."

³⁹ The "Separate answer of George R. C. Todd." Todd's heirs vs. Todd's admx.; File 1839, Fayette Circuit Court. [orig.]

⁴⁰ Mary Todd Lincoln to Abraham Lincoln, May —, '48. Now owned by Oliver R. Barrett, Chicago, Illinois. [orig.]

These statements, however, considered carefully in connection with the voluminous record of a litigation, no matter how real the grievances may have seemed to Mary and her brother George, are apparently without much if any actual foundation in fact. One does not read the musty files, without reaching the conclusion that Betsy Todd was a patient, even-tempered woman, with a devotion to her husband and all that was his in an unusual degree.⁴¹ By the summer of 1839, Mrs. Todd in thirteen years had borne her husband eight children. Seven were living, their ages ranging from eleven years down to an infant in arms, and the ninth child was born two years later. Under the existing circumstances, it is not surprising that the willful, impetuous temperament of Mary Todd clashed sharply now and then with the conventional ideas of her busy stepmother. Moreover, it is extremely probable that the attitude of Mary's grandmother, Mrs. Parker, who never quite forgave Betsy Todd for marrying the husband of her dead daughter, had considerable influence in fomenting such discord as there was in the Todd household.

But whatever her situation may have been at home, Mary Todd's last summer in Kentucky was well occupied with the good times of Lexington's social season. From the first of June to early fall the town was filled with wealthy planters and their families who came northward to avoid the sweltering heat and the insidious malaria of the Far South. The local newspapers have left a fragmentary record of social activities during their stay in the Blue Grass, and doubtless Mary Todd had her share in all the gaiety and entertainment.

So it may be safely assumed that she attended, on a September night in 1839, probably her last public function in the old home town, a "grand farewell ball" given, as stated, by "the élite of southern society who have resorted in Lexington during the past summer." The affair was "in the hands of gentlemen & their ladies from Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas and Alabama." The ballrooms of Monsieur Mathurin Giron were never more alluring than they were that evening. The walls were painted to represent landscapes of blooming orange trees set here and there in clustering tubs. Chandeliers and sconces were lighted with innumerable wax candles, yellow and green and rose. Gentlemen in blue broadcloth coats with brass buttons, buff waistcoats and laced ruffled shirts; ladies in white satins, with ethereal silk overdresses embroidered in fantastic figures, glided over the gleaming maple floors through the intricate, graceful mazes of the "Circassian Circle," to the soft strains of violin with pianoforte accompaniment. Couples with interesting things to say to each other occupied secluded benches along the iron balcony. "Rarely," said a gentleman who was present, "have we witnessed so brilliant a display of beauty and fashion as graced the occasion."

⁴¹ Years later, when her eldest stepson, Levi, a victim of unfortunate habits, had become estranged from his wife and children, it was Betsy Todd who vainly sought to reclaim him, and when he died, brought his body back to the old home and buried him by the side of his father and her own children in the Lexington cemetery. [*orig.*]

A month later, on a crisp autumn morning, the Todd carriage drove up to the trim little depot of the Lexington and Ohio Railroad at Mill and Water Streets. On the narrow track of strap-iron rails spiked down to sills of stone, stood the pride of the Western Country, a tiny steam locomotive called "The Nottaway." Attached to it was a single coach with seats for a dozen passengers inside and as many more on the top, which was surrounded by an iron railing.⁴² Old Nelson handed "Mis' Mary's" bags and boxes to the engineer who placed them beside the other luggage on the woodpile at the rear of the tender. Then, with a lurch and a shrill toot of the whistle, the wheezy engine started, and in a few moments the little train was rattling and swaying down Water Street and out through the brown hemp fields and somber meadows. Mary Todd had started on the long journey to her new home in Springfield.

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The Woman In Lincoln's Life

**With Special Emphasis
on
Her Cultural Attainments**

BY LOUIS A. WARREN

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THE WOMAN IN LINCOLN'S LIFE

WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON HER CULTURAL ATTAINMENTS

BY LOUIS A. WARREN

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An address before The Filson Club, April 3, 1944

An old axiom which must have contributed much to the raising of the intellectual standard for women is couched in these words: "Educate a man and you educate an individual, educate a woman and you educate a whole family." Possibly this truism was more timely in a day when women were not so directly engaged, as they are now, in almost every business and professional enterprise which invites a personal career.

A century ago the women of America were making their contributions to the advancement of civilization through the rather indirect channel of home influences. An impressionable and retentive son, or possibly a husband endowed with native ability and ambition, were practically the only vehicles through which a woman might influence and guide movements of national importance, and bestow upon her often unsuspecting benefactors the fruits of her own social graces and intellectual attainments.

The purpose of this brief monograph is to explore the field of Lincoln's early domestic relations and endeavor to discover in his adult home environment any factors that may have contributed to his phenomenal development. This approach will necessitate a careful study of the educational advantages and social training of his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, with special attention given to the vivid contrast between her early surroundings and those of the man she married.

Abraham Lincoln has become America's most revered statesman and, according to H. G. Wells, English historian, one

Dr. Louis A. Warren read this paper on April 3, 1944. It is such a careful and accurate analysis of the influence of Mrs. Lincoln on the development and accomplishment of her husband that it is important that it be published in permanent form.

of the half-dozen outstanding characters of civilization. It would seem to be of supreme importance, not only as an inspiration for the youth of today, but for future generations as well, to learn as much as possible about the people who influenced him most. Certainly no one lived so close to him for so long, or became so vitally interested in his advancement as his wife.

The mass of untenable data, usually uncomplimentary, which has become current about the life and character of Mary Todd Lincoln makes it very difficult to gain a sympathetic hearing for her. Any attempt to point out unusual accomplishments, which she is known to have achieved, may be looked upon as eulogistic in presentation and unsound in historical approach.

It is usually the case when a famous person is presented in an unfavorable light, that the stigma attached to the individual more or less reflects upon the kinsfolk bearing the family name. Members of the clan are reluctant to furnish historical data which would call further attention to the unfavorable publicity already broadcast, with the result that many of the very commendable family characteristics are subdued and the unfavorable traits become exaggerated out of all due proportions to the actual traits observed.

To a certain degree the unsympathetic and often vicious attack on the character of Mary Todd has had much to do with preventing an unprejudiced approach to a survey of the Todd family's contribution to cultural development in the West. It may be observed from a perusal of the public records and other authoritative documents that few pioneer families in Kentucky were more influential in the progress of higher education.

Rev. John Todd graduated from Princeton in 1749, and soon became located in Virginia, where there came to him as pupils in the school he conducted, his brother's three sons, John, Levi, and Robert Todd. After receiving a liberal education these young men migrated to Kentucky. John Todd, the eldest, was appointed by Patrick Henry to assist General George Rogers Clark in setting up a territorial government in the Illinois country, and he succeeded Clark as the provincial governor of this area.

John Todd was instrumental in the granting of the charter for Transylvania Seminary in Kentucky. At the May 10, 1780, session of the Virginia legislature an act was passed looking forward to the establishment of an institution of higher learning in Kentucky, and among the ten trustees appointed were the two older Todd brothers, John and Levi. Levi Todd was the grandfather of Mary Todd Lincoln. The first recorded meeting of the trustees was on November 10, 1783, and Levi Todd was present. Upon the death of Levi Todd in 1807, Henry Clay was elected to the board of trustees to succeed General Levi Todd.

According to Thomas M. Green, the Kentucky historian, John Todd was "the best educated and most accomplished of all the early pioneers and surveyors of Kentucky." Another authority called John Todd "The Father of the Kentucky Bar." He was best known by the pioneers as a military leader and his untimely death in the Battle of Blue Licks was a tragedy, indeed. However, the more enduring and far-reaching contribution he made was as a sponsor of higher education in the West, and in this role he represents not only the interests of his distinguished uncle under whose training he developed, but his brothers and their descendants who settled in Fayette County, Kentucky.

The keen interest in Transylvania University, located at Lexington, was manifest in all of the Todd men; seldom was there a board of trustees during the first fifty years of the school's history without a Todd as an active member. Mary Todd's own father, a son of Levi Todd, was given a certificate by Rev. James Blyth, president of the college, stating that Robert Smith Todd had studied "mathematics, rhetoric, logic, natural and moral philosophy, astronomy, Latin, Greek and history."

No one questions the importance of the environmental influence thrown about a growing child, not only in the home, but in the immediate community where the youth develops. We have observed the intellectual attainments of the Todds in general, and it is of interest to note that Lexington, Kentucky, where the Todds lived, became known as "The Athens of the West," because of its educational and cultural achievements.

Mary, next to the youngest daughter of Robert S. Todd, by his first wife, was a fine example of the intellectual attainments of the Todd family. She was brought up in the very community of her father's alma mater and her associates were the student body and faculty of the University, which comprised an important part of the city's population. It is to be regretted that co-education had not been established at that time, so that Mary could have enjoyed the firsthand opportunities of assimilating the advanced knowledge disseminated by this historic University.

Transylvania was supplemented then, as now, by many other institutions of learning which sprang up in the same cultural atmosphere of Lexington. One of these which Mary Todd attended was Ward's Private School, and the substantial old building occupied by this institution adjacent to the University campus stands today as a monument to the importance of this center of learning for younger pupils.

An institution which more directly influenced Mary Todd and which she remembered with much appreciation was Madame Mentelle's Select School for Girls. We have Mary's own statement that she "was educated by Madame Mentelle, a lady who lived opposite Mr. Clay, and who was an accomplished French scholar."

Madame Charlotte Victorie Le Clere Mentelle was born in Paris in 1770, the only daughter of a physician. She married Walderman Mentelle, the son of a member of the National Institute, who was a histographer to the king and professor in the Royal Academy. Madame Mentelle and her husband reached Lexington about 1805, bringing with them something of the intellectual atmosphere of the courts of France. She found a fruitful field for her profession in the city and many of the best families of Kentucky sent their daughters to her school.

Although Mary Todd lived not far away, she became a boarding pupil during the school period, leaving her home Monday morning and remaining in the school until the end of the week. The conversation in Madame Mentelle's school was carried on in French. The table manners and other household activities were supervised in such a manner that the students became well trained in all the domestic sciences.

One of Mary's schoolmates in the Mentelle School has left us these reminiscences: "Mary always made the highest marks and took the biggest prizes. She was unusually bright in everything she attempted. In history and rhetoric she was always at the head of the classes." Miss Todd must have come under the tutorage of Madame Mentelle when Mary was between fourteen and eighteen years of age. She was born on December 13, 1818, which would bring her under the influence of her French teacher between 1832 and 1836.

At the time Mary was in Madame Mentelle's school, a young man by the name of Charles H. Atherton, while visiting in Lexington, was stricken with typhoid fever and remained in the city several weeks. On January 1, 1832, while he was convalescent, he wrote a letter to his father, the Hon. Charles H. Atherton, who lived in Amhurst, New Hampshire. Professor Hedge, who was on the faculty at Transylvania University at this time, was an acquaintance of young Atherton's father, and in this letter the gist of a conversation with the professor was mentioned. Atherton informed his father:

"Professor Hedge told me the other day he was surprised to find how well educated the females were, better he thought than at Boston. He has visited the schools for females and thinks the system of education pursued here much better than that in New England." (*The Filson Club History Quarterly*, July, 1942, page 219.)

It might be of interest to note that Professor Hedge was from Cambridge, so he should have had firsthand evidence about the question of education for young ladies in both Boston and Lexington.

Mary Todd at the time this comment was made was fourteen years old and an attendant of one of these schools visited by Professor Hedge. She was a product of a system of education for young ladies that a university professor thought superior to that of Boston or New England, the accepted center of education in America. Certainly James Atherton and the Professor had no idea they were submitting valuable testimony about the educational background of a future President's wife.

Mary had several relatives, including three married sisters, who lived in Springfield, Illinois, and two of her cousins, John

T. Stuart and Stephen T. Logan, were outstanding lawyers there. Her father's brother, Dr. John Todd, also resided in Springfield and had two daughters, Elizabeth and Fanny, who were about Mary's age.

Mary Todd made her first visit to her relatives in Springfield, Illinois, in 1837 and remained about three months. She returned two years later, however, to make her permanent home with her sister, Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards, a daughter-in-law of the governor of Illinois. That she immediately made a favorable impression is acknowledged by those who have written about those early days.

One author who had no love for Mary Todd, but met her soon after she arrived in Springfield, admits that "She was a highly cultured woman, witty, dashing, pleasant, and a lady." On another instance he states: "She was rather pleasant, polite, civil, rather graceful in her movements, intelligent, witty, and sometimes bitter too; she was a polished girl, well educated, a good linguist, a fine conversationalist, was educated thoroughly at Lexington, Kentucky."

This might be the proper place to bring Abraham Lincoln into the picture, as he took up his residence in Springfield in 1837, the very year Mary Todd made her first visit there. It is not known, however, that Lincoln met her at this time. He had moved to Springfield largely through the influence of John T. Stuart, who had encouraged him to study law and took him in as a partner as soon as he was eligible to practice. As has been noted, Stuart was a cousin of Mary Todd.

Lincoln having reached the age of twenty-eight, in 1839, had lived in cabin homes all of his life up to that time. While a great many people of culture and refinement were occupants of log cabins, the atmosphere within log walls, with its primitive furniture and its lack of many elevating influences, was not always conducive to a superior code of etiquette. Especially at meal time it might be rather difficult to follow successfully any very advanced rules of table manners. In other words, Mary Todd's home environment and the physical surroundings with which Abraham Lincoln had been familiar revealed very little in common.

While Lincoln may not have made any noticeable economic progress up to the time he first met Mary Todd in 1839, even as early as his thirtieth year he was occupying an enviable place in the political life of Illinois. He was serving his third two-year term in the State Legislature, and probably was as much responsible as any other member of the "long nine" legislators for the removal of the state capital from Vandalia to Springfield. Even at this time he was possibly the outstanding Whig leader in the state, and the following year, 1840, he was chosen a presidential elector for Harrison.

Lincoln's political achievements bring us to one of the interests which both Lincoln and Mary had in common. Both worshipped at the political shrine of Henry Clay. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the fact of this common interest, and one feels that the "mill boy of the slashes," in this instance, indirectly assumed the role of a matchmaker.

Mary must have observed in Lincoln another potential Henry Clay, as Lincoln admitted in later years that Clay had been his "beau ideal of a statesman." People who heard Lincoln remarked that his was the voice of Clay speaking to the people again. His political philosophy was the philosophy of Clay. Of the books that shaped Lincoln's thinking in his mature years, the *Life and Speeches of Henry Clay* was the most important one.

It will be recalled that Mary Todd attended Madame Men-
telle's private school which was located opposite the home of Henry Clay. His broad influence in politics brought the prominent men of the nation to his door, and one of his most loyal admirers and supporters was his fellow townsman, Robert S. Todd, the father of Mary.

Mary had been brought up on the probabilities of Henry Clay's chances of gaining the presidency. It is not strange that the young ladies who went to school opposite Mr. Clay's home would talk about the likelihood of one of them marrying a president, and there seems to be a dependable piece of evidence that Mary herself talked about her own ambitions along this line.

Mrs. William Preston (nee Wickliffe), of Lexington, Kentucky, while visiting at White Sulphur Springs, made some statements about Mary Todd to a group of women. These

remarks were published in a current newspaper. The article states:

"Miss Todd had always insisted when quite a young girl that her husband would be President of the United States . . . After becoming engaged to him (Mr. Lincoln) she wrote to her friend, Miss Wickliffe, a playful description of the man of her choice, mentions his unprepossessing appearance and awkwardness, and with a merry appreciation of the humor of the prediction, again said: 'But I mean to make him to be President of the United States all the same. You will see that, as I always told you, I will yet be the President's wife.'

"Years afterward, in fact not more than ten or twelve years ago, in looking over the papers of his father-in-law, Governor Wickliffe, who had just died, General Preston came across a letter indorsed in Governor Wickliffe's handwriting, 'the most remarkable letter ever written by one girl.' This proved to be the identical letter written by Mary Todd in regard to her betrothed—Abraham Lincoln. When General Preston showed it to his wife she said she supposed that after reading it she had thrown it carelessly down on her father's desk, attaching no importance to it, but he, picking it up, was so impressed by it that he indorsed it as quoted above, and laid it away among his papers, to be found after the girlish prophecy had been fulfilled."

Mary Todd had lived in the presence of great men. She had the power to detect greatness even in the humble Abraham Lincoln. While Mary Owen, in 1837, could see nothing in Lincoln but just another pioneer somewhat deficient in the art of courting, Mary Todd two years later visualized in him a pre-eminent statesman.

When Abraham Lincoln made the acquaintance of this aristocratic young lady from Kentucky, it is quite evident that he was greatly impressed. She was undoubtedly the most brilliant young woman he had met up to that time, and her keen intellect was superior to the intelligence of most of the men he knew. While the courtship and marriage of these two young people is one of the most dramatic episodes in early American romance, inasmuch as the incidents relating to it do not fall directly within the scope of the monograph, this part of the story must be omitted. Possibly one statement which Lin-

coln made with reference to his love for Mary Todd will suffice.

A visitor at the White House, one evening, was standing with Mr. Lincoln in the great East Room, not far from where his wife stood in another group. All at once he spontaneously remarked as he looked at Mrs. Lincoln, "My wife is as handsome as when she was a girl, and I a poor nobody then fell in love with her, and what is more I have never fallen out."

We may assume, notwithstanding the detrimental statements of William Herndon to the contrary, that the Lincolns were happily married. It is true that they were obliged to find rooms in a boarding house where the charge was but four dollars a week, but inasmuch as they were the same accommodations which Mary's sister Frances and Dr. Wallace enjoyed after their marriage, it was not the first time that a daughter of the President of the Bank of Kentucky had lived at Globe Tavern.

Robert Todd Lincoln, the first child of the Lincolns, was born in this boarding house. However, not long after his birth the Lincolns were living in their own house. From that time on Lincoln became more definitely under the inspirational influence of his wife. Here in her own home there was created the cultural and intellectual atmosphere of Lexington. Here the years spent in Madame Mentelle's School for Young Ladies began to pay rich dividends as this western log cabin man was initiated into the realm of polite society.

What a trying task Mary Todd must have had as she attempted to introduce into the daily routine of her husband's activities a new mode of behavior. Amused at first, possibly, Lincoln soon came under the spell of this superior home mistress. Management, well prepared food, sanitation, social etiquette, were some of the problems presented in a course for young ladies which was primarily arranged for preparing a young woman for the most important of all vocations for women, that of being a homemaker.

Possibly one of the most valuable influences to which Lincoln was subjected in his home life was the use of good English in the family circle. The conversation carried on in perfect

diction would be far superior to any home influence Lincoln had heretofore experienced, and also would serve as a sort of a postgraduate course for this ambitious valedictorian of log cabin schools.

Some time after Senator Lyman Trumbull and his wife arrived in Washington in the spring of 1855, Mrs. Trumbull wrote a letter to a Springfield, Ill., friend in which she made this statement: "I have seen a great many prominent women since I came here, but I have not met anyone so beautiful and gracious as Lizzie Brown, or as pretty a talker as Mary Lincoln, or as sweet as Sue Cook." Among all the fine arts accomplished by women in Mary Lincoln's day, to be a fine conversationalist was one of the most desirable attainments.

There has been much said about what Mentor Graham, and a few other companions of the New Salem days, contributed to the education of Lincoln, but the intellectual atmosphere of his Springfield home was so superior to any previous instruction he had enjoyed, that a comparison is futile. It was not for an hour or a day that Lincoln came under the influence of his capable home instructor in adult education, but for nearly twenty years Lincoln and Mary were walking together toward the White House.

There is no attempt in this short paper to obscure the well known fact that Mary Todd Lincoln was a woman of temper, and undoubtedly Mr. Lincoln was often humiliated by an untimely display of temper on the part of his wife. It is unfair, however, to dwell unduly on one of her unfavorable traits of character to the almost total exclusion of many commendable virtues with which she was endowed.

It is of interest to note one or two statements made by visitors at the Lincoln home in the days when Lincoln was but a circuit riding lawyer, and compare them with some other observations made at the time the family was about to enter the White House. Isaac W. Arnold, of Chicago, an acquaintance of the Lincolns, made this statement:

"Mrs. Lincoln often entertained small numbers of friends at dinner, and somewhat larger numbers at evening parties. In his modest and simple home, everything was orderly and re-

finest, and there was always on the part of both Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, a cordial, hearty, western welcome, which put every guest perfectly at ease. Her table was famed for the excellence of its rare Kentucky dishes, and in season was loaded with venison, wild turkeys, prairie chickens, quails, and other game, which in those early days was abundant. Yet it was the genial manner and ever kind welcome of the hostess, and the wit and humor, anecdote, and unrivalled conversation of the host, which formed the chief attraction, and made a dinner at Lincoln's cottage an event to be remembered."

We presume that if Mrs. Lincoln had shown any snobbishness it would have been observed shortly after her husband's election to the Presidency. On November 20, 1860, Ada Brayman Bailhache wrote a letter to her mother in which she told of an evening spent at the Lincolns', she said:

"I spent an evening at Mr. Lincoln's a few evenings since and had a very pleasant time . . . Mrs. Lincoln is just as agreeable as ever, does not put on any airs at all, but is as pleasant and talkative and entertaining as she can be."

On December 15, 1860, *Leslie's Weekly* printed a portrait of Mrs. Lincoln with her two youngest sons, Willie and Thomas, or "Tad," and it appears as if they were well groomed. The comment about the picture states:

"Mrs. Lincoln is the daughter of the Hon. Robert S. Todd, of Lexington, Kentucky, and was educated with great care by her excellent parents and is much respected and beloved by all who come within the sphere of her social influence."

En route to Washington some very favorable comments were made with respect to Mrs. Lincoln. The editor of *The Crisis*, at Columbus, Ohio, who was anything but a warm admirer of President Lincoln, had this to say about his wife upon her brief visit:

"We found Mrs. Lincoln an unassuming and agreeable lady and hope she may find in the White House as much satisfaction as in her more modest and retired home in Illinois."

The same reaction is observed with respect to Mrs. Lincoln after she reached Washington. On March 3, 1861, Ezra Corn-

well wrote to Mrs. Cromwell from Willard's Hotel, commenting on the new President's wife as follows:

"Last evening about 10. p. m. Mrs. Lincoln held a short levee in the parlor which gave some hundreds the opportunity to be introduced and shake hands with her. She is a short plump body of a woman apparently from forty to forty-five, fresh healthy looking, and plain and becoming attire. I like her appearance much better than I did Miss Lane." (President Buchanan's niece, the preceding mistress of the White House.)

Much has been said about the qualification of Mrs. Lincoln to fill the place as First Lady of the Land. One of the most dependable students of Mary Todd is Dr. W. A. Evans, whose book, *Mrs. Abraham Lincoln*, is by far the most valuable work extant on Mrs. Lincoln's mental and physical condition. Dr. Evans gave a lecture before the Fort Wayne, Indiana, Woman's Club on September 21, 1931, in which he said:

"She was thoroughly educated and trained in polite society. No better educated woman entered the White House in the first hundred years of the presidency. She was a linguist, a super-conversationalist, a good writer—a woman of wit, mental quickness, most entertaining and of great charm."

Dr. Evans in his admirable book on Mrs. Lincoln states that "She entered life in Washington in high spirits with no signs of trepidation or fear. She was confident, happy, and hopeful." But society refused to receive her. Washington was a Southern city and Mary was a Southern woman, so she had some reason to believe that the proverbial Southern hospitality would make her many friends. However, she was ostracized instead of welcomed because she was the wife of a "Black Republican" president. When she turned to the Northern women they were even more critical and accused her of being in sympathy with the South and went so far as to charge that she was a spy.

Flavius J. Bellamy, on September 6, 1861, six months after the Lincolns arrived in Washington, wrote a letter in which he mentioned seeing Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln at one of the army camps in Washington. He commented upon the appearance of them in these words:

"The President is not half so ugly as he is generally represented—his nose is rather long but he is rather long himself, so it is a necessity to keep the proportion complete . . . His lady is charming enough to make up for all his deficiencies."

When the Lincolns had been in the White House less than a year, Mrs. Lincoln's third child, Willie, passed away. It was at this time that her mind was so disturbed that she should not be held responsible for the strange behavior which characterized her during the rest of the White House days, and then the great tragedy of her husband's assassination—April 14, 1865—struck her down. Following this calamity came the death of "Tad," her youngest son. And then (in 1875, from May to September) she became the inmate of a neuropathic sanitarium—at Batavia, Illinois—a collapse which she had been gradually approaching since 1862. She died in 1882, in Springfield, Illinois, at the home of her sister Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards.

Shortly after returning from Gettysburg, Mr. Edward Everett made a speech before one of his Boston clubs on some of the human interest incidents at the dedication. He commented on the informal dinner at the home of Judge David Wills where there were gathered many notable people, and he especially mentioned the French minister. This was his testimony with respect to the behavior of Mr. Lincoln. "In gentlemanly appearance, manners, and conversation, the President was the Peer of any man at the table."

The former president of Harvard University here was paying an indirect compliment to the headmaster of another educational enterprise located in a home where an impressionable adult student, with exceptional native ability, received part of his training. Abraham Lincoln's ability to perform as well as he did at Gettysburg, both in social contacts and in eloquent declamation, was due in no small measure to the cultural attainments of his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln.

CHAMBERMAID KATIE KILFEATHER was never surprised, when she reached linen room headquarters at the old San Pedro Hotel for her day's work, to discover some former guest returned to her floor.

Show business was like that, the chubby woman whose chestnut hair had grown gray among showfolk, learned after years at the shabby-genteel little hostelry in New York's Roaring Forties. One day an actor would be sitting on top of the world—with his name up in lights, a mansion in Beverly Hills, a suite in New York's swank Waldorf-Astoria. Then suddenly he'd slip—crash was the word for it, opined Katie—back to the spot where he started from.

But Lincoln's Day morning, Katie was stunned by the name she found on her pressing-board as having checked in through the night. "Evan Justice, Beverly Hills, Cal." Only last week she'd seen in the columns, heard on the airwaves, that the screen's newest dreamboat was not as a pistol in Hollywood. Yesterday she read of the new five-year contract he'd signed. The figures were staggering, and she chuckled over memories of Evan Justice's days on her hall, jobless and broke.

"But what's Ev back here for now?" she marveled. Pulling on her green uniform, she sped to his room—a cubbyhole on an 'nky black court, the only va-

A Short Story—

Thank You, Mrs. Lincoln

By Hollis Starnes

cancy on her floor. Getting no response to her rap, she opened the door with her passkey.

THE man was up; she could hear his shower running full tilt. At a quick glance about, she observed he had only one small bag with him, still half unpacked. "H'm, a hurry-up trip," she decided. On the desk she discovered an airmail special delivery letter, addressed to his wife in Beverly Hills. "A hurry-up trip indeed, or Pen would be with him!"

Evan Justice's wife always accompanied him on business trips East—didn't she run his business? But for this fact, Katie mused, he'd still be borrowing her tip money as of yore. For this soulful-eyed, silver-tongued lad had no sense of business at all, at all!

While waiting for him to emerge, she began putting the room in order. The ash tray on the desk bulged with cigaret ends, the wastebasket was filled with torn paper. As she emptied it into her trashbox she couldn't help but notice that all the torn sheets were in Evan's handwriting. "Looks like he wrote 20 letters an' tore 'em all up! I'll



"Why have I let myself be pushed into a life I never wanted?" he asked.

bet 'twas some business letter. In the end he's sent it to Pen to write for him!"

What a lucky man he was to have this bright, smart, sensible wife, thought the maid, with a small puff of personal pride as she mused, "If I hadn't played Dan Cupid for 'em, where'd they be now? Poor Pen still pound-

in' a typewriter in that manager's office, Ev poundin' the Broadway pavements on a job hunt!"

NOW the bathroom door opened, and Hollywood's dreamboat stood before her in his dressing gown. "Katie! I didn't hear you come in!" Suddenly he was sweeping her into his strong arms, as if she were a Hollywood dream queen. "Surprised to find me here?"

"Ye could 'a' knocked me over with a feather!" she declared. 'Tis a droll thing, Ev, but this very mornin' on me way to work I was thinkin' o' yourself an' Mr. Lincoln."

"Me and Mr. Lincoln?"

She nodded. "'Tis his day, an' 'twas yourself that introduced me to him, as ye might say—tellin' the sad story of his life, an recitin' that speech about the government of the people by the people shall not perish from the earth."

"You left out, for the people," he said chaffingly, then looked at her soberly as he pulled shirt, tie and sox from his suitcase. "'Tis a droll thing, Kathie, but it's really you and Mr. Lincoln who brought me back here. He seemed so close to me in the old days. All he stood for and

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ce'

strived for inspired me. I was going to carry his banner forward, remember?"

She said gravely, "Well, ye done your bit all the war years."

"So did millions of others. What have I done since?"

She stared at Hollywood's dreamboat, who under his mask was a man of serious mien. "Ye been buildin' a name with the public, Ev. What's wrong with that? A movie star can be a big influence for good in the world."

He asked bitterly, "Playing lightweight lovers and clowns? The jingle of Hollywood gold got me awhile—but I'm through!"

"Through?" she cried. "But this new five-year contract ye just —"

"I'm breaking it!" he broke in, and waved to the letter on his desk. "I've written Pen. She can handle the studio—she engineered the deal."

Katie was stunned at the note of resentment in his voice. "But it sounds like a wonderful deal, Ev!"

He said somberly, "What sounds good in print may sound the knell of doom to a man's heart!"

"Have you talked this out with Pen?"

"She just tried to talk me out of it. After all, it undoes the high-powered work she's put in on me, pushing and promoting!"

Gently the maid said, "But all her pushin' was for your own good!"

HE TURNED on her with surprising belligerence. "Was it? Or did she enjoy being the power behind the throne, the puppeteer pulling the strings?"

"Ye been no puppet!" cried Katie boldly. "Ye got too much gumption!"

"Have I? Then why have I let myself be pushed into a life I never wanted, surrounded by things I care nothing for?"

"Ye care for Pen," she said softly.

"I've come to resent her. I thought on the plane coming over, 'Now I know how Lincoln must have felt, with that man-aging wife!'"

Katie asked coolly, "Have ye ever thought what he'd 'a' done without that managin' wife?"

Evan bit the words out, "Yes. Been a freer, happier man."

"That's your opinion," Katie said evenly. "To me own idea, he'd 'a' shrunk more 'an more from the outer world, spent his time at the grave o' that school-girl sweetheart ye told me of. He might never 'a' been a public man."

The star said impatiently, "Who can say what he might have done? Lincoln was a Man of Destiny!"

"Mebbe his wife helped nag him to it," said Katie. "Remember the story ye told me how, after she gave him a lecture, he'd always say, 'Thank your, Mrs. Lincoln'? Ye said that was sarcasm, but I'm of a countr'y opinion. Mr. Lincoln was a man o' great sense. He knew in his heart that his wife spoke for his good. He'd the grace to thank her for it!"

The man's shoes were now on; he crossed to the closet, yanked down his suit and grabbed a shirt. "In that letter I thanked my Mrs. Lincoln. I told her she could have all I own—but not me any more. I'm not going back."

He stamped into the bathroom, slamming the door. When Katie recovered her breath, she went on with her bedmaking.

WHEN he came out dressed, she asked with deep tenderness and understanding, "Have ye thought what ye want to do next, lad?"

He said humbly, "I'd like to keep on as an actor, if I could play characters I respect, in plays that have something to say. I thought I might start a small stock company in some little town."

"Like one a' them summer barn theayters, where ye play to a few hundred people?"

"What of that? Aren't they people?"

"Aren't the millions ye play to in movies people too?" she countered. "Don't forget today's screamin' bobbysoxers will be tomorrow's wives an' mothers. They'll follow ye in the roles ye'll do soon—strong, meaty roles in movies with somethin' to say. Ye got to see things with a long-range view, Ev. The lightweight lover an' elown o' today can be the mouthpiece o' great thoughts tomorrow!"

He was getting into his overcoat. "You sound like my wife!"

"Pen's right behind what ye're longin' for!" the maid pleaded. "But she's got the long patience, she knows how to wait. When the time comes, she'll wangle that studio into givin' ye the chance at great things. Does she know where ye are now?"

He picked up his hat, gloves and the letter. "She'll know when she gets this!"

He was gone. "Poor Pen, she must be worried sick!" the maid groaned as she crossed to the telephone. She put in a long distance call to the Coast. "At

least I can tell her he's safe an' sound an' just mailed her a letter!"

While she waited for the call she went back to sweeping and dusting the room. "What ails these lads who long to help humanity, an' forget their own wives?"

THE phone rang, and she heard Pen's voice, tense and anxious: "Hello!"

Cheerily she said, "Hello, Penny darlin'—'tis Katie! How are ye?"

"Oh, Katie—have you heard from Ev?"

"Sure! He's here safe an' sound!" She heard the door open, turned and saw Evan. Pleadingly she held the phone toward him. "'Tis Pen on the line!"

He looked at her a long moment, then took up the instrument. "Thank you, Mrs. Lincoln! Hello, Pen. What's that? Oh, I was just saying something to Katie—a little old joke we have."

Katie started to slip out of the room. On the threshold she heard his shout, "Hey, wait a second—add this to your trash pile!" He heaved something after her, which landed in the hall.

She went out and closed the door, then stooped and picked up the unmailed letter to Pen. Inside she could hear his voice: "I'll take the first plane home. Anything you want me to bring you, besides my old no good self?"

Mary Lincoln's Girlhood Recalled

Christa Sunc Monitor 2-14-56

MARY finished the preparatory course at Dr. Ward's, and when about fourteen entered the select boarding school of Madame Victorie Charlotte Leclere Mentelle on the Richmond Pike. Here, according to the announcement in the Lexington Intelligencer in 1838, "Young Ladies" could receive "a truly useful & 'solid' English education in all its branches. French taught if desired. Boarding, Washing & Tuition \$120.00 per year, paid quarterly in advance." It was a finishing school where they taught, along with other social graces, letter writing and conversation. In these Mary learned full well, for she became an artist at both.

Mary Todd "desired" French. She made the statement years afterwards that the scholars at Madame Mentelle's were not allowed to speak anything else; at all events she learned to speak and write French and retained that knowledge in her later life. It was to serve her well in the White House when she had distinguished foreign guests and in later life when living in France. In 1877 she was to write from Pau: "I have been here sufficiently, not to allow them, to take advantage of me, as is so frequently done, with strangers who do not understand their language. Happily I am not in the latter category."

There were four rich years at Madame Mentelle's for the eager girl to whom each new experience has its charm. Every Monday morning Nelson, the impressive coachman, would bring the Todd carriage to drive her in state down a long avenue to Madame Mentelle's "opposite Mr. Clay's," to use Mary's words of many years later. On Friday Nelson would call again to take her home for the week end. Mary received along with other things instruction in dancing, which she loved, for Madame, like a true Frenchwoman, took great pains with the graces and manners of the young ladies in her care. . . .

The year Mary entered the Mentelle school, 1832, was an important one in other ways. On February 18 her oldest sister Elizabeth was married to a junior at Transylvania University. This student-husband had come of a distinguished family. He was Ninian Wirt Edwards; his father, Ninian Edwards, had been territorial governor of Illinois, United States senator, and later state governor. Socially and politically there was at that time no more prominent family in Illinois. In 1833 this couple moved to Springfield to live, thus forming a steppingstone on the path that was to lead Mary to the meeting with young Lincoln.—From "Mary Lincoln," by RUTH PAINTER RANDALL. Little, Brown & Co. 1953.

lacy leaflets, and the lone mahogany. It was only when Madame asked whether this was really the way to *le bébé* that I noticed we had turned in the wrong direction with our backs to the Glades, and were heading for the cultivated areas.

"Your scheme won't work," I cried. "We tried large-scale draining some years ago, and the salt water seeped in. We've done everything. We even bored holes in the outer rim of rock to let the fresh water run out. But the sea came in instead, and the wells of the Glades stopped flowing, and went brackish. It took a long time to get things right again."

Monsieur had no comment on this. He seemed to be deep in thought, and anyway, we had reached the fields, and he was already out of the car.

♪ ♪ ♪

"*C'est formidable*," he cried, as his eyes roamed over the expanse of green stretching as far as the very horizon.

"Yes," I insisted, "but you still haven't seen the real Glades."

"Why not stay here?" he smiled. "After all, this is what we're all working for, isn't it?"

"Pierre!" wailed Madame, "come, let's go."

"You go, my dear, I'll remain. I must find out more about this. How do they manage to drain on such an enormous scale as this?"

Madame and I looked at each other, and, as if moved by a single thought, walked toward the car.

"Well, Monsieur Bonjour," I prompted, "shall we pick you up on our way home? We shan't return till evening, you know. It's several hours yet." We sat back, smiling at each other, waiting, Madame holding the car door open for him. She glanced at her watch.

"Oh, don't worry about me. I shall be perfectly happy here." He added quietly to himself: "*Ah, ces Américains!* And all that swamp yet untouched!"

I glanced back as we drove away, and saw him standing there, with feet apart, a small figure in the immensity of the reclaimed fields, gazing raptly at a thousand green acres of tomatoes, while Madame and I were heading forward into the yet greater vastness of the Everglades themselves.

ELIZABETH SINCLAIR

PRESIDENTIAL LETTERS

Edited by Nathaniel E. Stein

A TRUMAN LETTER



In the January, 1951 issue of *Woman's Home Companion*, Barbara Heggie wrote an article entitled "What Makes Margaret Sing." In the article she pointed out the difficulties facing members of the family of the President, and the overall tenor was sympathetic.

On December 20, 1950 Mr. Truman wrote a three-page handwritten letter to Miss Heggie (Figure 1). It was mailed in a personally-addressed White House envelope, with an air mail stamp, and marked "personal and confidential." Miss Heggie apparently replied to Mr. Truman and asked for permission to publish the letter, to which the President again replied on January 8 with the typewritten letter (Figure 2). Miss Heggie apparently sold the letter, for member Richard Maass acquired it from the late Philip Rosenbach.

The exchange of letters between Mr. Maass and Mr. Truman describes the way in which the path was cleared for the publication of the holograph letter.

*The Manuscript Society
Office of the President
285 Madison Ave., N.Y.C.
Nov. 19, 1954*

HON. HARRY S. TRUMAN
Independence, Missouri

DEAR MR. TRUMAN:

As a student of American history for perhaps twenty years and a collector of sorts, it was my pleasure in 1951 to acquire by purchase a letter written by you, which by reason of its warmth and great understanding will always retain a favored position in my collection of presidential letters.

The letter was written by you from the White House on December 20, 1950, to Miss Barbara Heggie, a staff writer for the "Woman's Home Companion" & was prompted by an article which Miss Heggie had done, entitled "What Makes Margaret Sing?" You wrote so sympathetically, detailing the hardships and obstacles which face the families of our Chief Executives, and cited earlier examples where wives of presidents had been hounded by misguided people. At the conclusion of the letter, you asked Miss Heggie not to publish it, since these days "only my mad letters are published."

Apparently, she wrote you, asking for permission to publish, anyway, for there is a second letter to Miss Heggie, from you, repeating your desire of non-publication. Although your wishes were observed, Miss Heggie

*Ms Lincoln mentioned by
pres. Harry S Truman*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dec. 20, 1950

My dear Miss Heggie:-

I have just read your story in the
Woman's Home Companion - "What Makes
Margaret Sing?"

It is lovely. Thank you from my heart.
The vast majority of our people can never
understand what a terrible handicap it
is to a lovely girl to have her father the
President of the United States.

Stuffed-shirt critics and vicious political
opponents of mine sometimes try to take
it out on Margie. It's her dad they are after
and Margie understands.

You have ~~course~~ more ~~neatly~~ ^{clearly} stating the
situation in its true light than anyone

Figure 1 (a)

displayed what was, in my opinion, a lack of discretion by selling your letter to a dealer from whom I bought them shortly after.

I have not permitted any publication or use of your fine letter without your permission, feeling ethically if not legally bound to observe your wishes. Incidentally, I was approached during the 1952 presidential election campaign by parties who wished to make political capital of the letter. The answer, of course, was "No."

Now I have been approached by a friend in Philadelphia, who like me,

2

who has made the attempt.

I hope some time you'll make a study of the families of the Presidents. It is most interesting. Martha Washington and her children and what happened to them; Abigail Adams, Dolly Madison, the wife of Andrew Jackson and how she was wounded to her death. Mrs. Lincoln, the most mistreated of all the White House First Ladies, except Mrs. Cleveland, the first Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, and the Wilson daughters; Alice Roosevelt Longworth, Mrs. Coolidge and Herbert Hoover's sons.

Of course we are too close to Franklin Roosevelt, and his daughter and sons to evaluate properly what the White House

Figure 1 (b)

is a collector and amateur historian. He is publishing on his own a book of personal writings of our thirty-four presidents; has heard from some source of the letter of yours which I own, and would like to include it with other presidential letters. I promised him that I would write you for your thoughts and I will be guided accordingly, of course.

My personal collection is not limited to presidential material, but includes a full set of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence as well as considerable Colonial and Revolutionary period items, the latter being

did to them.

You've made a contribution to history that will help some Ph.D. in the future to evaluate all these ladies and families I've mentioned.

Hope you'll regard this communication as one from a fond father and keep it confidential. Only my "mad" letters are published!

Sincerely,

Harry Truman

To
Miss Barbara Heggie,
Women's Home Companion,
Springfield, Ohio.

Figure 1 (c)

my specialty. One of my pleasures is the giving of illustrated talks on historical subjects to schools, colleges and clubs—a more or less kaleidoscopic American history course based solely on original holographic material, starting with a document of Ferdinand and Isabella, dated 1478 and concluding with a note of Adlai Stevenson, hopefully stated as our next president (This is the extent of my political bias!).

It would give me great pleasure to show you such of my collection in which you might have interest. On one of your trips to New York, you might wish to stop at my office which is in the Grand Central Area, or come to my home in White Plains, from which town I commute daily.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 8, 1951

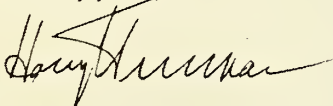
Personal

Dear Miss Heggie:

I certainly appreciated your good letter of the second and I am glad you were pleased with my expressions to you.

I do not want the letter published because it was a personal matter between you and me and, if you publish it, it would appear that I was merely writing you the letter for the purpose of publication. I just wanted you to understand that Margaret's mother and I appreciated the article you wrote and we wanted to let you know it, so please don't publish the letter.

Sincerely yours,



Miss Barbara Heggie
Bog Hill
Soansburg Road
Brewster, New York

Figure 2

Mrs. Maass and I, as particular admirers of you, would be honored by such a visit.

In any event, I would appreciate some word from you with regard to the possible publication of your fine letter to Miss Heggie.

Sincerely,

/s/ RICHARD MAASS

P.S. The Manuscript Society is one of my avocational interests. In order to sustain this interest, I am, prosaically enough, in the investment business. RM.

Winter 1964

Harry S. Truman
Federal Reserve Bank Building
Kansas City 6, Missouri
November 29, 1954

DEAR MR. MAASS:

I read your letter of the nineteenth, with a great deal of interest. I never could understand why correspondents of the President of the United States should want to peddle the letters he writes, although that seems to be customary. It is all right after the man is dead but while he is alive I don't think much of it.

I'd like to suggest to you that you wait until my book is published before you use the letter for publication. Under the contract with the publishers I am not at liberty to authorize the publication of documents such as this until after the book comes out. That will be some time after the first of the year.

I certainly did appreciate your good letter.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ HARRY S. TRUMAN

MR. RICHARD MAASS
President, The Manuscript Society
285 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

December 7, 1954

HON. HARRY S. TRUMAN
Federal Reserve Bank Building
Kansas City 6, Missouri

DEAR MR. TRUMAN:


Your wishes will be observed and no publication of your letter which I have (and about which I wrote you) will be authorized until after the publication of your book.

I sincerely hope that it will be on the best seller list.

Very truly yours,
RICHARD MAASS

BELLES LETTRES

Edited by Alexander P. Clark



At a recent gathering of Mid-west literary academics the inevitable question arose in conversation: "In an historical sense, what are the valuable literary manuscripts of tomorrow—or more precisely what creative work being done today is going to be sought after by the discriminating collectors of the future?"



Lincoln Lore

April, 1975

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Number 1646

THE VICE-PRESIDENCY TWICE BECKONS LINCOLN

by Louis A. Warren

Editor's Note: The history of the Lincoln National Life Foundation now spans forty-seven years. In that time it has had only three directors, all of whom are still active in the Lincoln field. Dr. Louis A. Warren, our first director, is ninety years old this month and has graciously consented to do this guest article for *Lincoln Lore*. Dr. Warren entered the Lincoln field in 1926 with a book, *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood*, which Benjamin Thomas has called "the most thoroughly documented study of the Lincolns' Kentucky years." Thomas adds, "Warren is chiefly responsible for our more favorable view of Thomas Lincoln." Almost fifty years later, Dr. Warren is still making contributions to the Lincoln field.

M.E.N., Jr.

Press, radio, and television, over the past several months, have been giving preferential attention to sensational stories associated with the Vice-Presidency of the Nation. The climax may have been reached in a meticulous investigation by Congress into the private life of the recently installed incumbent. With the public eye still focused on this controversial office, it would appear to be a favorable time to observe how Abraham Lincoln reacted upon twice being recommended as a candidate for the next to the highest office in our political system.

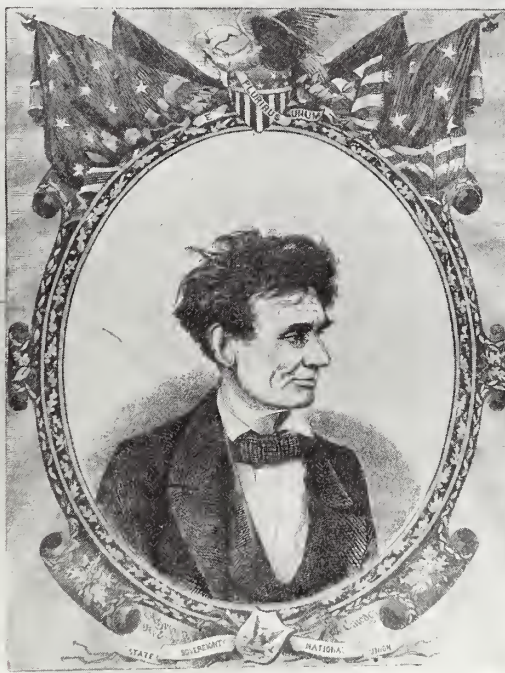
The unimpressive status of the position through the years is well set forth in the December, 1974, issue of *American History Illustrated*, under the abridged title, "Forgotten Men." This publication of the National Historical Society calls attention to the forty Vice-Presi-

dents who have occupied the office up to August, 1974. Thirteen of them were elevated to the Presidency, and seven others were selected who will be remembered for episodes unrelated to the office routine. The remaining twenty, or one half the total number of the men occupying this high station, were grouped in a category described as, "men past-recollection."

One commentator, on referring to the insignificance of the position, referred to it as a "sinecure," which, according to Webster, is "an office or position of value which involves little or no responsibility or service." One authority refers to the holder of the title as, "A second-rate man agreeable to the wire pullers, always smuggled in."

Occasionally, during the past few years, the advancement of the Vice-President to the Presidency through constitutional procedure has occurred. This has had a tendency to make the office seem more desirable than heretofore. The recent appointment to the Vice-Presidency of a well known statesman of recognized ability, a member of one of America's first families, may suggest a revision of the public opinion about the status of the formerly unwanted office. Certainly it will be more inviting to the political aspirants.

Before this new appraisal of the seat is accepted, it is important that it should be reviewed in retrospect to appreciate more fully how Abraham Lincoln, fortunately, escaped the ordeal of the



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HESLER

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

This lithograph of "Abraham Lincoln" from a photograph by Hesler bears the imprint of E. H. Brown, Del & Sc, Chicago. On the lower margin there is a pencil notation by George William Curtis: "These prints were showered through the Wigwam immediately after Mr. Lincoln's nomination May 1860. (Geo. Wm. Curtis)." The Lincoln National Life Foundation also owns another print of this same lithograph which carries a notation in ink by John G. Nicolay: "The above was circulated in Chicago on the day of Lincoln's first nomination for President." These are the only two known examples of this lithograph in existence.

Vice-Presidency. The earliest threat was at the first National Republican Convention in Philadelphia in 1856 and once again at the convocation in the Chicago Wigwam in 1860.

Abraham Lincoln's political rebirth occurred about five years after he had served a term in Congress. His return to the political forum is recorded in a third-person autobiographical sketch: "In 1854, his profession had almost superseded the thought of politics in his mind, when the repeal of the Missouri compromise aroused him as he had never been before." Inasmuch as the repeal was passed by the Senate on March 5, 1854, and subsequently signed by the President, it was called the birthday of the newly organized Republican party. The official birthday was later established as July 6, 1854.

An observer's account of Lincoln's return to the political scene is recorded by Richard Yates, at what is known as "The Springfield Jubilee," celebrating the Republican victories in 1860. He stated: "I had spoken and voted against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and when on my return home at the close of the long session of 1854, having published a card that I would not be a candidate for re-election, I was met at the depot in Springfield by Mr. Lincoln. He said I had taken the right course on this question, and though he could not promise me success in a district so largely against us, yet he hoped for the sake of the principle, I would run, and if I would, he would take the stump in my behalf."

Lincoln briefly referred to the original Compromise in these words: "At length a compromise was made, in which, like all compromises, both sides yielded something. It was a law passed on the 6th day of March, 1820, providing that Missouri might come into the Union with slavery, but that in all the remaining part of the territory purchased of France, which lies north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, slavery should never be permitted."

Four months after Lincoln had been awakened by its repeal and had again entered the political arena, another incident occurred which greatly stimulated his newly acquired interest in the "No Extension of Slavery" movement. On July 10, 1854, Cassius Marcellus Clay of Lexington, Kentucky, a relative of Henry Clay, paid a visit to Springfield. The presence of the anti-slavery exponent in the capital city must have aroused in Mary Todd Lincoln many reminiscences of her early Lexington days. While Cassius was attending Transylvania University in Lexington, the dormitory burned and Cassius was one of the students who found temporary lodging in the Todd home. He stated on one occasion: "I was on very agreeable terms with the Todd Family, who were always my avowed friends during my antislavery career." He later graduated from Yale, and, while in New Haven, he was greatly influenced by William Lloyd Garrison and became an exponent of the abolitionist's philosophy. Later, at Lexington, a month before his visit to Springfield, he established an anti-slavery newspaper called *The True American*.

Upon Clay's visit to Springfield, the Secretary of State refused him permission to speak in the State House. Cassius responded that even in his own state — a slave state — the common courtesy of citizenship had never been withheld from him; no court-house or state-house door had ever been shut in his face. He gave his speech in Mather's Grove. This rebuff recalls an incident which illustrates the dynamic personality of Cassius Clay.

A Kentucky town in which he was to speak posted warnings that "no anti-slavery speeches will be permitted under penalty of death." Upon Clay's arrival, says William H. Townsend in *Lincoln and His Wife's Home Town*, "he walked unattended down the center aisle of the packed court-room, mounted the rostrum and calmly faced the muttering, jostling crowd." These were his introductory remarks: "For those who support the laws of the country," he announced in an even, steady voice, "I have this argument," and he placed a copy of the Constitution on one end of the table. "For those who believe in the Bible, I have an argument from this," and he placed a copy of the New Testament on the other end of the table. "And for those who regard neither the laws of God or man I have this argument," and he laid a brace of long black-barreled pistols with his bowie-knife on the table in front of him. Then he plunged, without interruption, into his speech."

Sometime after Clay returned from the Springfield visit he remarked: "Lincoln gave me a most patient hearing. I shall never forget his long, ungainly form, and his ever sad and homely face. . . . I flatter myself, when [I recall how] Lincoln

listened to my animated appeals for universal liberty for more than two hours, that I sowed seed in good ground, which in the providence of God produced in time good fruit."

The Illinois contingent of the newly organized party was somewhat tardy in perfecting the state organization, but on May 29, 1856, a state convention was called to meet at Bloomington. Among the many speeches made, the closing address by Lincoln was easily the feature of the day and possibly his most eloquent declaration during his Illinois years. It became known as "The Lost Speech," inasmuch as the reporters became entranced by his oratory and no one of them made an available recording of it.

The Washington press on January 17, 1856, published a call to "The Republicans of the Union to meet at Pittsburg on the 22nd. of February, for the purpose of perfecting a national organization." Another incentive was "the providing for a National Delegate Convention of the Republican Party on a subsequent date, to nominate candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency." There was also released an urgent appeal to take a stand on "the only great issue now before the Country—slavery or freedom."

Nineteen days after the Illinois convocation at Bloomington, the national convention opened its sessions at Philadelphia on Tuesday, June 17, 1856. The permanent chairman was Colonel Henry S. Lane of Indiana. John C. Fremont of California was chosen as the Presidential nominee on the first ballot. The chief order of business for the second day was the selection of a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. The trial ballot for the nomination recorded these several aspirants with the total number of votes each one received: William L. Dayton, New Jersey, 253; Nathaniel P. Banks, Massachusetts, 46; Abraham Lincoln, Illinois, 110; David Wilmot, Pennsylvania, 43; John A. King, New York, 9; Charles Sumner, Massachusetts, 35; Lieut. Thomas Ford, Ohio, 7; Cassius M. Clay, Kentucky, 3; Jacob Collamer, Vermont, 15; Joshua R. Giddings, Ohio, 2; Whitfield S. Johnson, New Jersey, 2; Henry C. Carey, Pennsylvania, 3; Aaron S. Pennington, New Jersey, 1; Henry Wilson, Massachusetts, 1; Gen. Samuel C. Pomeroy, Kansas, 8. It will be observed that Dayton received less than one half the total votes, while Lincoln was given twice as many votes as any of the other participating candidates.

A Pennsylvania delegate, John Allison, placed Lincoln's name in nomination, but, when the totals showed a majority of the votes were cast for Dayton, in order to reach a unanimous choice, Lincoln's name was withdrawn, followed by all of the other competitors. During the nominating speeches, Lincoln received many complimentary comments. It was an honor indeed to be the runner-up and a popular candidate for the Vice-Presidential nomination at the first national convention of the newly organized Republican party.

One of the stories of how Lincoln was first informed about the results of the voting, associates him with David Davis, the presiding judge on the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Illinois, where Lincoln practiced law. Davis was at the hotel in the town where the court was in session, when the mail arrived with news from the convention. He observed Lincoln coming down the street which caused him frantically to wave the paper reporting that Lincoln had received 110 votes for the Vice-Presidency at the convention. When Lincoln arrived and was given the information, he commented: "I reckon that ain't me; there's another great man in Massachusetts named Lincoln, and I reckon it's him." But, he was mistaken.

Seven years earlier Lincoln had visited the Bay State where he had spoken in favor of Zachary Taylor, Whig candidate for the Presidency. His schedule brought him to Worcester on September 13, 1848, where he was entertained at dinner in the home of Levi Lincoln, mayor of the city, and the Governor of the State from 1825 to 1834. Several distinguished guests were present and one of them recalled: "I well remember the jokes between Governor Lincoln and Abraham Lincoln as to their presumed relationship." At last the latter said: "I hope we belong, as the Scotch say, to the same clan; but I know one thing, and that is, that we are both good Whigs."

This episode recalls a visit which the author made to this same house in which Abraham Lincoln was entertained. My host, Waldo Lincoln, grandson of Levi Lincoln, mentioned at dinner that I was seated in the same position at the table, possibly in the same chair, which Abraham Lincoln had occupied, when a guest in 1848. It was the above mentioned Waldo

Lincoln who prepared the exhaustive genealogy of the Lincoln Family, showing the relationship of the Illinois and the Worcester, Massachusetts, branches. Abraham had properly identified Levi as "the great man in Massachusetts named Lincoln." Sidetracked by ancestral and personal references, we should return to Philadelphia for a final comment.

It is evident from Abraham's complete surprise and apparent confusion about the identity of the Lincoln who had been the runner-up on the trial ballot at Philadelphia, that he was unaware of any state-wide plans, then underway or previously made, to place his name among the candidates for the Vice-Presidential nomination in 1856. While his term in Congress had been of local significance, the beckoning gesture for the national office had lifted him out of local politics and raised him to a station of nationwide attention. He could now be considered as a leading Western representative of the newly organized Republican party.

One of his earliest recognitions of leadership was revealed in the state convention of 1858, which named him, "The first and only choice for a seat in the United States Senate." His acceptance address, which clearly set forth the issue for the subsequent campaign, became known as "The House Divided Speech," so designated because of his startling premise, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

His opponent in the contest, Stephen A. Douglas, was nationally known and the series of debates arranged attracted the attention of political America. Recognizing Douglas as the key figure in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and Lincoln as the chief Western spokesman for the "No Extension of Slavery" contingent, the contest became something more than a local combat. While Lincoln failed to gain the senatorial seat, he did poll the larger number of popular votes and established himself as the leading Westerner opposed to the extension of slavery.

Lincoln's rise to fame, because of his solid arguments during the debates, assured for him serious consideration for a place on the national ticket of his party in the next Republican Convention. One of the earliest feelers which arrived was a letter from Thomas J. Pickett of Rock Island, suggesting that the press of Illinois put Lincoln forward for the Presidency of the United States. On April 16, 1859, Lincoln replied to this suggestion as follows: "... I do not think myself fit for the Presidency. I certainly am flattered, and gratified, that some partial friends think of me in that connection. ..." Reflecting on the vote at the Philadelphia Convention, he may have felt he was "fit" for the Vice-Presidency.

Two books were published in 1859, presenting the names of those who might be contestants in the presidential race of 1860. One was by D. W. Bartlett with the title, *Presidential Candidates*, listing twenty-one prospective contenders. The other was by John Savage with the caption, *Our Living Representative Men*, noting thirty-four qualified leaders. It is noteworthy that the later published Savage book named all of the Bartlett list with but two exceptions. This combined list of important men might serve as a political "Who's Who" for 1860 and is submitted with party affiliations noted:

Democrat: John Minor Botts, John C. Breckenridge, Albert G. Brown, Howell Cobb, Caleb Cushing, George M. Dallas, Jefferson Davis, Daniel S. Dickinson, Stephen A. Douglas, James Guthrie, James H. Hammond, Sam Houston, R.M.T. Hunter, Andrew Johnson, Joseph Lane, James L. Orr, John M. Read, Horatio Seymour, John Slidell, Alexander H. Stephens, Henry A. Wise.

Constitutional Union: John Bell, John J. Crittenden, Edward Everett, Millard Fillmore.

Republican: Nathaniel P. Banks, Edward Bates, Simon Cameron, Salmon P. Chase, William L. Dayton, John C. Fremont, John P. Hale, John McLean, William H. Seward, Henry Wilson.

Unclassified: John E. Wool.

It is not strange that the name of Lincoln is missing, as the manuscripts were prepared before his name had become prominent in the East. His address at Cooper Union in New York City on February 27, 1860, and the subsequent trip to New England are recognized as his introduction to that section of the country. The Cooper Union Address before the Young Men's Republican Union of New York is accepted as the most comprehensive political address which he had given up to that time.

One of the aspirants for the Presidency in 1860 was Simon

Cameron, a Senator from Pennsylvania. As early as October 14, W.E. Fraser, one of his supporters, wrote to Lincoln proposing a Cameron-Lincoln combination for the Republican ticket. On November 1, 1859, Lincoln replied: "... I shall be heartily for it, *after* it shall have been fairly nominated by a Republican national convention. ..." This statement documents the assertion, that he was not irresponsible to being named as a Vice-Presidential candidate, but the reply also left open the opportunity for an ultimate decision before the convention was called to order. Lincoln's refusal to approve the ticket immediately did not prevent the publication of a campaign pamphlet entitled *Address of the Cameron And Lincoln Club of the City of Chicago, Ill., To The People Of The North West*. This final appeal in the pamphlet gives emphasis to Lincoln's anticipated contribution as a member of the team: "The nomination of Mr. Lincoln will secure us the votes of Illinois and Indiana, and we hope to carry Oregon and California also. We *may* succeed with other candidates; with Cameron and Lincoln, we *will*."

Lincoln, when en route to New York for his speech at Cooper Union, while passing through Philadelphia, was handed the cards of Simon Cameron and David Wilmot but was unable to contact them before leaving the city. Four months had passed since they first solicited Lincoln's partnership on the ticket, but apparently they feared he would make some agreement about the Vice-Presidency with Seward, while in New York. It is evident that a Seward-Lincoln ticket had already been proposed.

It seems probable that the Young Men's Republican Union may have had some specific reason for offering Lincoln 200 dollars to speak in New York, and very likely it had political relevancy. His appearance was a rousing success and his introduction to leading celebrities of the East opened up new political horizons.

En route to New Hampshire to visit his son Robert, attending Exeter Academy, he was joined on the train by Frederick Smyth who was to introduce him at Manchester. Lincoln had been reading an address Seward had delivered before the United States Senate, and laying the paper down he said to Smyth, "That speech will make Mr. Seward the next President of the United States." However, when Smyth came to the conclusion of his introductory remarks, in presenting Lincoln he said: "The next President of the United States!"

An interesting phase of his New England trip was his purposely passing through Massachusetts without making a single speech. The state had already announced its support of Seward, and apparently Lincoln did not wish to exhibit any display of rivalry. Upon his return to New York, however, the situation there seems to have changed. One of the young men advised him: "When he came, they thought he might make a good running mate for Seward, but after hearing him, they are for him for President, regardless of what happens to Seward."

Succeeding the New York visit, Lincoln was the most coveted Vice-Presidential candidate in the nation. These possible pairings were published in the press: Cameron and Lincoln, Seward and Lincoln, Chase and Lincoln, also Horace Greeley's choice, Dayton and Lincoln, possibly others. In 1860 the Vice-Presidency beckoned Lincoln in preference to all others. Lincoln had numerous advantages as a Vice-Presidential nominee (and, as it turned out, as a Presidential nominee). Unlike Salmon Chase and Simon Cameron, who had bitter factional enemies in their home states, Lincoln's support in Illinois was secure and united, and the Republicans needed Illinois. Unlike Cameron and Edward Bates, he was sound on the slavery issue because he had steadily opposed slavery as a moral evil. He had an instinct, too, for avoiding controversial stands on unessential issues. Personally temperate, Lincoln had avoided the prohibition agitation, especially when it became a hot issue in Illinois after 1853. Despising the principles of the Know-Nothing agitation, Lincoln avoided public condemnations of that party's adherents. He also avoided the side issue of disobedience to the Fugitive Slave Law.

Abraham's auspicious speaking itinerary in the East gave a new impetus to his political aspirations considering the forthcoming convention. David Davis appears to have assumed the leadership of the voluntary group of Lincoln's supporters, combining their strength with the Chicago constituency. When the convention opened, it appeared like a one-man show with Seward apparently so far ahead it forecast a

"no contest." One news correspondent put it this way: "Senator Seward is head and shoulders above all competitors, in experience, in statesmanship, in authority, in influence, in every quality which can fit a man for the Presidency." Horace Greeley, the night before the balloting began, advised his *New York Tribune* associates that Seward would be victorious. It is known he was violently opposed to Seward.

The printer's delay in making the ballots ready, causing postponement of the balloting to the following day, was greatly in Lincoln's favor, as during the night considerable opposition to Seward had been generated. There were four, and possibly more, objections which caused the dissatisfaction: 1. He had failed to gain the support of important Pennsylvania. 2. Greeley and his *New York Tribune* were against him. 3. Corruption in the Legislature of New York while he was governor. 4. The dictatorial manner of his delegates at the convention.

The fact that Lincoln had been the Vice-Presidential choice of all the leading opponents gave him a great advantage over any other second choice. The first ballot gave Seward, 193, Lincoln, 102; second, Seward, 184, Lincoln, 181; third, Lincoln, 354, Seward, 110 1/2. No other candidate polled more than 50 1/2 votes.

One of the most convincing exhibits to support the supposition that there was a concerted effort to procure the Vice-Presidential nomination for Lincoln is a poster of his profile, now on display in the Lincoln National Life Foundation. On the margin of this eight and one-half by eleven inch lithograph is this note inscribed by George William Curtis, a Seward delegate from New York: "These prints were showered through the Wigwam immediately after Mr. Lincoln's nomination." There is no printed information on the broadside to reveal what office this pictorial candidate seeks, no name of the sponsoring organization, nor even the commercial printer. The fact that the circulars were not distributed until after Mr. Lincoln had been nominated for the Presidency, eliminates any indication that they were prepared as flyers to assist in his nomination for the Chief Executive office in the Nation.

Three possible distributors of the handbills were the Seward, Cameron, and Lincoln committees. The fact that Curtis of New York made no comment in his inscribed note about the origin of the posters, implies that the Seward group had no part in the distribution and no desire to boost Lincoln. The most likely sponsors were the Cameron-Lincoln loyalists, the earliest public advocates of Lincoln for the Vice-Presidency. Their western offices were in Chicago where the "tousled hair" photograph was made and used in producing the lithograph. While its rustic appearance would win votes in the West, it is doubtful if it would have any value in garnering votes in the East.

It is evident that the Lincoln convention group had nothing to do with the origin of the "tousled hair" flyer. The failure to use it before or during the balloting for the Presidency almost nullifies any connection of the lithograph with Lincoln's winning the office.

The distribution of the prints, however, does present a strong argument that Lincoln was a recognized contender for the Vice-Presidency at the Wigwam Convention. The conclusion might also be drawn, that inasmuch as Lincoln was the publicized selection for the minor office of at least four of the Presidential hopefuls, it is quite natural that if their first choice failed, the delegates would swing to their junior partner on the ticket as their next choice, to salvage at least a part of their original ticket. There seems to have been little attention paid to the potential strength of these original supporters of Abraham Lincoln as Vice-President.

Lincoln's reflections on the Vice-Presidency did not cease with his own nomination to the higher office. Quite naturally, he would have considerable interest in the selection of his running mate. He must have observed with more than common curiosity that in the balloting for the nomination the runner-up to the successful nominee was none other than Cassius Marcellus Clay. He had been active in securing Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency and made a speech from which this argument is excerpted: "It makes a great deal of differ-

ence to you whom you nominate . . . and it makes a much more vital difference to us [Kentuckians]. . . . We call upon you to nominate Abraham Lincoln, who knows us and understands our aspirations."

Even before Lincoln had an opportunity to meet the Vice-Presidential nominee, Hannibal Hamlin of Hamden, Maine, there were certain press releases that made Lincoln anxious to confer with his partner for the subsequent campaign. No sooner had the names of the two successful candidates reached the East than some newspapers announced surprise and dissatisfaction with the selections. One of the first reactions was the arrangement of the names of the victorious contestants. Many regarded Hamlin, an Eastern man, to be superior to his Western associate and referred to the combination as "The Upside-down Ticket."

While the new Presidential nominee may not have been as well known as Hamlin, the name Lincoln was a household word with the Hamlins. When Hannibal was but nine years old, a lawyer from Worcester, Massachusetts, whose name was Enoch Lincoln, came to live in the Hamlin home. Within the next five years, Enoch was elected to Congress and next became Governor of the State of Maine. He was Hannibal's hero and eventually young Hamlin went to Congress and also became Governor of Maine. Enoch Lincoln was a brother of Levi Lincoln, the host of Abraham Lincoln at Worcester in 1848.

Inasmuch as this commentary has relied on current public sentiment for a congenial atmosphere in which to develop this argument, it would seem agreeable to bring it to a conclusion in a similar fashion. The first person who put in writing a declaration with reference to Abraham Lincoln's eventually becoming President of the United States, was not a contemporary politician, but a "woman," Mary Todd of Lexington, Kentucky. While she was living with her sister, Mrs. Ninian Edwards at Springfield, Illinois, she became engaged to, and later married, Abraham Lincoln, a member of the Illinois Legislature. She wrote to one of her girl friends, Margaret Wickliffe, a daughter of the Governor of Kentucky, and after a playful, but not a very flattering, description of the man of her choice, she continued: "But I mean to make him to be President of the United States all the same. You will see that, as I always told you, I will yet be the President's wife." Governor Wickliffe, years later, after Lincoln had become President, came across the letter and wrote on it this endorsement, "the most remarkable letter ever written by one girl."

Researchers observing the intellectual training this young lady acquired at Lexington, "The Athens of the West," are agreed that her advanced formal education was superior to that of any other First Lady who occupied the Executive Mansion up to the time of Mrs. Lincoln's tenure. The cultural atmosphere which she created and nourished in her home, barely mentioned by most of her biographers, contributed greatly to the mental capacity of her husband.

We have observed that Lincoln was first a prospect for national recognition by becoming the runner-up in the contest for the nomination of Vice-President in the first National Republican Convention at Philadelphia in 1856. This nod, for one of the two Chief Executive offices, may have contributed more to his political advancement than we have recognized.

The multiple nods made to Lincoln as a Vice-Presidential nominee in the campaign of 1860 are almost inconceivable. It is doubtful if, ever before or since, one political aspirant has been the first choice as a running mate by so many different candidates for the Presidential nomination. Would it be presumptuous to assume that these unusual political alliances may have been largely responsible in elevating him to the office which his superiors coveted? As the dwindling hopes for the first place on the ticket faded out, in order to salvage a part of the preferred combination, would they not swing to their junior partner rather than to one of their competitors?

The National Republican Convention, convening at the Chicago Wigwam in 1860, had the unique distinction of making a beckoning gesture to a Vice-Presidential hopeful and announced that Abraham Lincoln of Illinois was the duly elected Presidential nominee.



Lincoln Lore

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Lincoln and "Civil Religion"

Abraham Lincoln's religion was once a subject of burning controversy among most Lincoln students. Richard N. Current gave the subject its last notable consideration by an academic historian in 1958 (in his chapter entitled "The Instrument of God" in *The Lincoln Nobody Knows*). Since then, churchmen, theologians, and professional students of religion have claimed the field that historians have aban-

doned. Far and away the most capable work produced since 1958 is William J. Wolf's *The Almost Chosen People: A Study of the Religion of Abraham Lincoln*, published in 1959 and reissued as *The Religion of Abraham Lincoln* in 1963 and as *Lincoln's Religion* in 1970. Wolf, a professor at the Episcopal Theological School, wrote a balanced account that deserves its popularity. Since then, however, the studies of Lincoln's



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 1. "A Communion Gathering in the Olden Time" is an illustration from *Presbyterian Reunion: A Memorial Volume, 1837-1871* (New York: De Witt C. Lent, 1870). It is suggestive of the norm of American religious experience in Abraham Lincoln's day. Even the restrained Presbyterians held religious services out of doors, away from an institutional church. And one can see that the single minister seems almost inadequate for the masses present.

religion have become increasingly didactic, championing Lincoln as "the chief theologian of civil religion" that America reputedly needs now. Elton Trueblood's *Abraham Lincoln: Theologian of American Anguish*, published in 1973, is the most widely noted of these recent attempts to find in Lincoln a model for a twentieth-century theology.

A word about this twentieth-century theology, "civil religion," is in order. It is a loose liberal theology which says that the nation in its history must be informed by some spiritual role. As a liberal theology, it conceives of spirituality as embodied in part in social morality. As Herbert Richardson says in "Civil Religion in Theological Perspective" (in Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones, eds., *American Civil Religion* [New York: Harper and Row, 1974]), "The concept 'civil religion' unites two terms: the civil order and the religious order." It is broadly ecumenical and therefore rather uninstitutional, unchurchly, and anti-creedal. It is historically oriented and conceives of revelation as a gradual historical development. A recent critic of civil religion (and of Abraham Lincoln as theologian or prophet of the religion), Melvin B. Endy, Jr., of the Religion Department at Hamilton College, terms it "simply . . . the mythic belief that the United States is a latter-day chosen nation that has been brought into existence and providentially guided as a fundamentally new social order to serve uniquely as a 'city on a hill' for the rest of mankind."

Abraham Lincoln is an important prophet in this scheme for several reasons, not the least of which is that he never too closely identified this nation's purposes at any one time with God's will. Champions of civil religion fear just what its critics harp on as its dangerous weakness: it might lead to an intolerant belief that this nation state can do no wrong. The Civil War President's famed expression of concern "that I and

this nation should be on the Lord's side" in response to a clergyman's question whether "the Lord was on our side" becomes a crucial episode for the advocates of civil religion. (In truth, this quotation is known to us only through the second-hand recollections of painter Francis Bicknell Carpenter, *Six Months in the White House* [New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1866], page 282.) Another major document, of course, is the Second Inaugural Address with its forgiving pledge of "malice towards none; . . . charity for all." Thus Lincoln strived to make the war a moral crusade against the social evil of slavery without ever assuming that God's purpose was so clear that the opposition had to be seen strictly as malevolent forces of Satan's darkness. "His patriotism," says Trueblood, "was of such magnitude that it cannot easily be exaggerated, but it was never idolatrous, and it was saved from idolatry by the overwhelming sense of the sovereignty of God" (page 118).

Once Lincoln's Christian statesmanship is so interpreted, it is easy to fit the rest of his life into a scheme which nicely fits the demands of civil religion. His own personal faith developed historically and slowly through periods of anguished doubt and uncertainty about the divine will. "One of the important features of Lincoln's theology" as Trueblood describes it, was "that it was a *development*." Lincoln's "spiritual pilgrimage" led from "theological positions of his early manhood" to mature ones which had "little in common" with the earlier ones. In fact, he probably went through a stage in which he was the village skeptic:

In his effort to reach a rational theology, Lincoln as a young man had very little real help. There was no church at New Salem, and few of his neighbors cared greatly about ideas. Though the deep sense of reverence which had developed in the Indiana forest seems never to have left the young man, he began to speculate in ways which made some people think of him as verging on infidelity. Certainly he was influenced for a time by the amateur philosophizing of his pioneer neighbors, as he revolted against the ignorant preaching which he heard from time to time. As a young boy in Indiana, he had enjoyed mimicking the hell-fire and brimstone preachers of the raw frontier.

Lincoln argued, for a time, a belief in what he called the "Doctrine of Necessity," what we would call determinism today.

In 1841, Lincoln and Mary Todd temporarily broke off their engagement to be married. Lincoln was thrown into such a slough of despond that he neglected his duties as a legislator and went to visit his old friend Joshua Speed in Kentucky. Speed's mother-in-law gave Lincoln a new Bible, and Lincoln said of it in a letter, ". . . I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the 'Blues' could one but take it according to the truth." Twenty years later in the White House, Lincoln still remembered the gift of the Bible. Most historians mark this date, 1841, as a time when Lincoln began to have a renewed awareness of the Revealed Word.

The next step in his spiritual pilgrimage was a new awareness of the Word as it came from preachers. In 1850, Lincoln's three-year-old son Edward Baker died after a fifty-two day illness. Mary Lincoln was so shaken that she joined Springfield's First Presbyterian Church, the pastor of which, Dr. James Smith, consoled her and preached the sermon at her son's funeral. Her husband did not join, but he began to attend services more regularly, as is evidenced by his renting a pew in Dr. Smith's church.

The years of the Civil War were the last big step in Lincoln's pilgrimage. It was a time so suffused with a sense of crisis and great moral questions that it is difficult to focus on specific events in the way one can in Lincoln's earlier life. Nevertheless, one date does seem to stand out in all accounts, February 20, 1862. On that day, Lincoln's eleven-year-old son William Wallace died. Mrs. Lincoln, who had herself been severely shaken by the domestic tragedy, recalled later, in re-



Courtesy Illinois State Historical Library

FIGURE 2. Dr. James Smith was the minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Springfield from 1849 to 1856. President Lincoln remembered the family's counselor and appointed him Consul to Dundee, Scotland.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 3. The First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Illinois, had as a full-fledged member Mary Todd Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln rented a pew there and heard some of Dr. Smith's sermons.

gard to Lincoln's religion, "He first seemed to think about the subject when our boy Willie died, and then more than ever about the time he went to Gettysburg." (Mrs. Lincoln admitted, incidentally, that her husband was "never a technical Christian.") Mary Todd Lincoln could not herself completely sort out the discrete events of that blurred period of daily crises, and she seems to have linked his religious development somewhat with the Gettysburg Address. But she did recall that there was an abrupt change (it was the "first" time he thought about it) after Willie's death.

Thus Lincoln's religion, never orthodox but increasingly profound, developed fully in time, the civil religionists tell us, to inform the most important actions of his Christian statesmanship, especially, of course, the Emancipation Proclamation, decided on as a policy by Lincoln in the summer of 1862.

Religious writers are now much too sophisticated to fall for the myriad of unreliable stories of secret promises made to clergymen days before his death that Lincoln was to convert and become a full-fledged member of some church or other. They listen to what the historians tell them were the facts of Lincoln's religious life and attempt merely to interpret them in their own way. They seem in a great haste, though, to master the facts and move on to the important didactic work at hand. Unfortunately, the Lincoln story deserves a more leisurely examination, the sort of examination which does not wrench the man from his historical context but carefully measures him against the events and culture of his own times.

In his haste to fit Lincoln into his theological scheme, Trueblood has failed to fit Lincoln into the historic surroundings of Lincoln's own life. There was a sort of American civil religion that was being championed in Lincoln's own time, and he was notably impervious to its appeal. In fact, there was an attempt to found a specifically religious party in American politics in

the 1850's, the American or Know Nothing party. Informed by an impatient reforming zeal to take a stand on issues which the established Whig and Democratic parties avoided, the Americans waged campaigns to lengthen the period of naturalization for immigrants to twenty-one years (the same time it took a native-born American to gain the franchise), to exclude foreign-born citizens from holding public office, and, above all else, to keep the Catholic Church from receiving public money for parochial schools. The public schools of Lincoln's day required Bible reading and supplied the Bible used by Protestants for the purpose. Catholics used a different Bible and reasoned that their tax dollars ought not to go to the purpose of changing their sons and daughters into Protestants. The issue stirred hatred and political excitement as only public school issues can in American political history.

Although Know Nothingism did not measure up to the standards of today's ecumenism, it was at least a nonsectarian movement. It required cooperation among all the differing Protestant sects to the end of halting what was viewed as the Roman menace to American civil liberties. The chief complaint against the Roman Catholic Church was that it did not believe in separation of church and state nor in freedom of thought and expression, two fundamental aspects of American political identity. Complaints about specific religious interpretations of, say, the Eucharist did not find their way into the political literature.

That Lincoln was never tempted by the Know Nothings is common knowledge. That the temptation must have been very great is not so commonly acknowledged. Lincoln told Owen Lovejoy on August 11, 1855, that the Know Nothings in Springfield "are mostly my old political and personal friends; and I have hoped their organization would die out without the painful necessity of my taking an open stand against them." The Know Nothing enthusiasm even infected Lincoln's own home. In 1856, he cast his fortunes with the Republicans and John Charles Frémont. The Americans and Whig remnants also had a candidate in the field, Millard Fillmore, and, had there been female suffrage in that day, Mrs. Lincoln would have voted for a different candidate from her husband. Writing to her sister Emilie Todd Helm on November 23, 1856, Mrs. Lincoln discussed the recent election:

Your Husband, I believe, like some of the rest of ours, has a great taste for politics & has taken much interest, in the late contest, which has resulted very much as I expected, not hoped—

Altho' Mr L- is, or was a *Fremont* man, you must not include him with so many of those, who belong to *that party*, an *Abolitionist*. . . . My weak woman's heart was too Southern in feeling, to sympathise with any but Fillmore, I have always been a great admirer of his, he made so good a President & is so just a man & feels the *necessity* of keeping foreigners, within bounds. If some of you Kentuckians, had to deal with the "wild Irish," as we housekeepers are sometimes called upon to do, the south would certainly elect Mr Fillmore next time[.]

Lincoln's religion was exempt from the anti-Catholic animus which was a norm of American Protestantism in that pre-ecumenical era. In fact, Lincoln's religion was for the most part unlike that of most Americans in his day. The other great aspect of antebellum Protestantism was evangelicalism, enthusiastic revivalism. Indeed, the two great forces were closely related. The original impulse for revivalism in the two decades after 1800 had fed, in some part, off the fear of the Catholic menace in the West. And both phenomena were aspects of enthusiastic religion. There was no cool rationalism in the barks, jerks, laughing exercises, singing exercises, anxious benches, prayers of faith, and sermons from the heart which gave this era of American religious history, known as the Second Great Awakening, its distinctive cast. And there was no cool rationalism in the Know Nothing



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 4. The Reverend Phineas D. Gurley ministered to Lincoln's spiritual needs while he was President. He conducted Willie's funeral service and delivered the funeral address at the White House after Abraham Lincoln's death.

movement, which Michael F. Holt has described as "the politics of impatience." By contrast, Lincoln's religion was notably quiet, private, and rationalistic rather than enthusiastic in tone.

Now doubtless the civil religionists' answer to this would be that I have just pointed out all the reasons that Abraham Lincoln is the superior prophet of American civil religion. They argue that a civil religion is inevitable. Therefore, they would simply say that Lincoln's is the superior version of civil religion, uniting morality and statecraft without uniting specific religious institutions and the state. In fact, Elton Trueblood finds just these traits to be the superior ones in Lincoln's religious example: (1) He never joined a church because no creed was completely satisfactory. (2) His religion needed no ministers and no institutional church; it was a religion that relied on the Bible and private prayer and a careful and humble reading of the Divine Plan as revealed gradually in the workings of the American electorate. There was no embarrassing fundamentalist enthusiasm about Lincoln's dignified calls for national days of fasting and thanksgiving during the Civil War. (Mr. Trueblood, incidentally, is a Quaker, and his own religion has never required preachers or an institutional church.)

It is unfair and unhistorical to suggest by this that Lincoln was superior to his benighted age and that his more restrained religious experience looked forward to a better day when passionate emotionalism would wither and religion would be more dignified, more sophisticated, and less the result of crude mechanical contrivances like the anxious bench. Actually, the norm of religious experience in Lincoln's own day was increasingly anti-creedal (in that it stressed the role of the heart in conversion over the role of any intellectual assent to

systematic doctrine enunciated in theological sermons). It was also anti-churchly. Revivals took places in camps and fields and tents, not within the confines of an institutional church presided over by an established minister. Lincoln's religion thus resembled the religion of his day in *unessential* matters; it was different in the essential one, the personal form of expressing religious passion. Many Americans did it by falling on the ground or at least by professing a changed heart. Lincoln expressed it in musings on the mysterious workings of the Divine Will and apparently by increasing private reading of the Bible and increased attention to religious teaching by ministers.

The civil religionists were so happy to find in Lincoln's spiritual pilgrimage a gradual development or growth that flowered finally in those war years of terrible passion that they failed to note the most obvious aspect of it: *it was always utterly private and personal.*

All of the major landmarks of Lincoln's religious history were events which had absolutely nothing to do with civil society, the state, the nation, politics, moral reform, or the general public. He found the Bible as a cure for deep personal depression caused by the break up of his romance with Mary Todd. He first rented a pew in a church when he experienced the death of an infant son. He took his first interest in religion large enough for his wife to perceive it when he lost another young son to death in 1862. Mrs. Lincoln said his interest *increased* at the time of the Gettysburg Address, but she said it was triggered by Willie's death. It seems wrongheaded to try to found a *civil* religion on a prophet who was utterly *private* in his own religious experience. The civil religionists use Lincoln's example to inspire a form of religion which did not move Abraham Lincoln himself.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 5. The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church was Phineas Gurley's pulpit. The church now contains chimes and bells that were gifts of Robert Todd Lincoln and Mary Lincoln Isham, son and granddaughter of Abraham Lincoln.

Mary Todd Lincoln was the Martha Mitchell of Civil War days, says Linda Levitt Turner, who compiled the latest and the most definitive collection ever of letters written by Abraham Lincoln's wife.

"Martha Mitchell made the midnight telephone calls. Mary Lincoln wrote the midnight letter," said Mrs. Turner, who with her father-in-law, Justin G. Turner, compiled more than 600 letters in the book "Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters."

"I think Martha's very, very much like Mrs. Lincoln. Who was the man she wanted to crucify-Fulbright?" said Mrs. Turner, rippling through the pages of her book to find an 1864 letter written by Mrs. Lincoln to her friend Senator Charles Sumner. It was just one example of Mrs. Lincoln's political meddling; she asked him to intercede, to make sure General Banks did not get a certain appointment. "Gen. Banks is considered a weak failure, overrated and a speculator," wrote Mrs. Lincoln without the President's knowledge.

Mrs. Turner adds that Mrs. Lincoln was a warm and deep person who went from "an emotional and exuberant girl who got carried away by everything" to a pathetic widow whose erratic behavior was a combination of "mild mental illness," sorrow at the death of her husband and daily attacks from critics and the press.

Mrs. Turner says the real sorrow was that Mrs. Lincoln had the intelligence, the interest in politics, the "energy and compassion to have been ranked among the outstanding first ladies," but came to the White House at the "most tragic hours in its nations history and was destroyed by the experience."

She says that, among other things, there was not only interest in politics but great physical attraction between the Lincolns. In the countless pages of prose by Mrs. Turner, which tie the letters together and give scope and meaning to them, there are numerous quotes of Lincoln's about how taken he was with Mary Todd and how he never fell out of love with her. "Their first child was born nine months, less four days, after they were married. Now that means nothing necessarily, but remember those were Victorian days when women held off for months and months sometimes before coming near their husbands. And Mary Lincoln also referred to Abraham as her 'lover' as well as her husband."

The book took enormous research and got its start in 1967. At that time, Mrs. Turner's father-in-law, a real estate businessman whose passion was collecting Lincoln memorabilia, thought of compiling her letters. Then, he had only about 15 letters himself..." Her father-in-law's role was to get some letters for Mrs. Turner and to open doors for her. Through his friends--such as Quincy Mumford at the Library of Congress--she was able to find some 300 letters that had never been published in their entirety. There were other times when she went on a frantic search. "Charles Hamilton said he had a letter of Mrs. Lincoln's nobody ever heard of. It accused Andrew Johnson of complicity in her husband's murder. I don't think she really believed it--she was having a bad day (Mrs. Lincoln). ...It was on her absolutely delicate paper and was real--if I know anything, it's her handwriting. I typed all those letters myself." Shortly after her husband's assassination, Mrs. Lincoln wrote a female friend, saying, "as sure as you and I live, Johnson had some hand in all this."

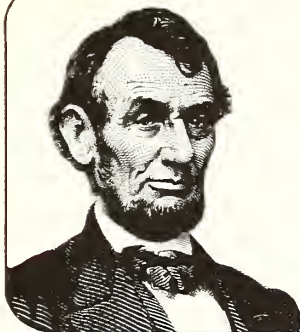
Mrs. Turner is often asked to compare Mrs. Lincoln with other first ladies and she has worked out some similarities. Mrs. Lincoln's incredible obsession with clothes can be compared to the shopping expeditions of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, which Mrs. Turner calls a "serious occupation." "Look at poor Jackie who does nothing but shop. She has a thing about shopping. If you read Women's Wear, she's in and out of Valentino's. Mrs. Lincoln did absolutely the same thing--only she didn't have the money to do it." During the belt-tightening days of the Civil War Mrs. Lincoln was running up huge debts to refurbish both herself and the White House.

She bought \$1,000 cashmere shawls and countless velvet hats and ball gowns, the obsession turned into a mania in her later days--when, for example, she once purchased 84 pairs of gloves.

Now, Mrs. Turner wants to write a biography of Mrs. Lincoln to answer a lot of questions. "There is this whole area of how her debts got paid, what part she played in Washington, why her husband was so atrociously absent-minded and really didn't see the things she was doing." Myra MacPherson WASHINGTON POST NEWSPAPER.

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Lincoln Lore

November, 1981

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1725

MARY TODD LINCOLN (1818-1882)

At 8:15 on the evening of July 16 a hundred years ago, Mary Todd Lincoln died in Springfield, Illinois. Since her return from Pau, France, in 1880, she had been living with her sister and brother-in-law, Elizabeth and Ninian Wirt Edwards. Declining health rather than a desire to end her self-imposed exile abroad had caused Mrs. Lincoln to come back to Springfield. Since her husband's assassination, Mary had said repeatedly that Springfield held too many memories.

Though she had taken no exercise for a long time, Mrs. Lincoln was able with assistance to move about her room until the afternoon before her last day. Plagued with boils, diabetes, and probably other illnesses as well, Mary's health had not been good for years, but her death came as a surprise. It was reported that she was planning a trip to the seashore to restore her health. She had refused to see a physician for some time, but after her collapse on the afternoon of the fifteenth, she consented to see the Edwardses' family doctor, T. W. Dresser.

There was nothing Dr. Dresser could do, and Mary realized that her end was near. She did not express any concern about the future or leave any dying message. Or perhaps it would be better to say, she had been leaving her dying message in letters and conversations since 1865: she wanted to be free of earth's sorrows and to be reunited with her husband and children in the next world. Late on the evening of the fifteenth, she lost the ability to speak and answered questions by blinking her eyes. At 1 a.m. on the sixteenth, she lapsed into a coma. She died without any signs of pain.

Mrs. Lincoln's only surviving son, Robert Todd Lincoln, was serving as Secretary of War in Washington. Informed by telegraph that his mother was failing, he received hourly messages on her condition. He arrived in Springfield Tuesday morning, July 18. The funeral was the next day.

Mrs. Lincoln's body lay on view in a casket in the Edwardses' north double parlor. She had married Abraham Lincoln on the same spot some forty years before. Her hands were visible in the casket, and reporters noticed her wedding ring.

The casket was closed at the house and taken to the First Presbyterian Church, which was thronged with mourners. All business in Springfield halted at this point. Shelby M. Cullom, Judge Samuel H. Treat, Milton Hay, James C. Conkling, Colonel John Williams, General John A. McClernand, J. A. Jones, J. S. Bradford, and Jacob Bunn placed the coffin at the foot of the altar.

Most of the pallbearers' names are familiar to Lincoln students. Shelby Cullom became a political associate of Lincoln's after the 1856 Presidential election when Cullom joined the Republican party. In 1864 he defeated Lincoln's old law partner, John Todd Stuart, in a race for the United States House of Representatives. At the time of Mrs. Lincoln's funeral, he was Governor of Illinois.

Samuel H. Treat was Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. Abraham Lincoln had argued many cases before him. Milton Hay had studied law in the Stuart and Lincoln office. By the time of Mrs. Lincoln's funeral, he had retired from a successful practice.

James Cook Conkling was the friend of longest standing among Mrs. Lincoln's pallbearers. In 1841 Conkling had married Mercy Ann Levering, one of Mary's closest friends. He was a political ally of Lincoln's, close enough for the President to entrust him with reading an important public letter on administration policy to a Union mass meeting in Springfield in 1863. Conkling was a successful lawyer.

John Williams was a Springfield merchant and banker, active in Republican politics, who had accompanied President Lincoln's remains from Washington to Springfield in 1865. John A. McClernand was one of three Democrats among the pallbearers. His association with Lincoln dated only from the Civil War when Lincoln made him a general as part of his policy of giving military appointments (and those only) to members of both parties.

John S. Bradford, also a Democrat, had been a neighbor of the Lincolns' and had run the store where they bought their books and stationery. Jacob Bunn,



*From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum*

FIGURE 1. The last photograph of Mrs. Lincoln.

Springfield grocer and banker, was among the few pallbearers who had at least as close a relationship with Mrs. Lincoln as with her husband. After Mary was released from an insane asylum in 1875, he managed her estate, sending her the income from it while she resided in Europe. J. A. Jones has not been identified.

The church was elaborately decorated. Between the casket and the altar stood a representation in flowers of the "Pearly Gates Ajar," three feet high. Visible through the arch of the gates was a bust of Abraham Lincoln. To modern taste the symbols might seem a little heavy-handed, but it can at least be said that this was an accurate reflection of Mrs. Lincoln's views. There was a floral cross, five feet high, and a floral pillow given by the citizens of Springfield. Carnations formed the shape of an open book on which "Mary Lincoln" was written in forget-me-nots. At the foot of her coffin was a broken column on which a representation of a snow white dove was perched.

The Reverend R. O. Post of Springfield's First Congregational Church began the service by reading a scriptural passage and a prayer. The choir sang "Nearer My God to Thee." Mrs. Lincoln had apparently expressed a desire to have no eulogy, and the Reverend James A. Reed, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, dwelt in his sermon on an analogy with two pines he had seen standing side by side in the Allegheny Mountains. They had grown up so closely together that their roots were intertwined and their trunks appeared almost joined at the base. One had been blasted by a storm and died, and in a few years the companion tree wasted away and died as well. Reed thought Abraham's and Mary's lives were very like those of the two pine trees. John Wilkes Booth's bullet killed her as surely as it did her husband. Her life after April 15, 1865, was only a living death.

At the end of the sermon, the Reverend T. A. Parker of the First Methodist Church read a prayer. The coffin, followed by a long procession of carriages, was taken to Oak Ridge Cemetery. Reed said a brief prayer in the vestibule of the Lincoln Tomb.

Like her husband, Mary became the subject of myth almost immediately. Jane Grey Swisshelm, a feminist reformer and journalist who had met Mary Todd Lincoln in Washington during the Civil War, hastened to write a letter to the *Chicago Tribune*, eulogizing her old friend. Mrs. Swisshelm (now single; she was divorced from Mr. Swisshelm) wrote an interesting and not altogether inaccurate letter. "I never knew a woman," she said, "who more completely merged herself in her husband"—a judgment with which most modern writers would be in complete agree-

ment. Such was not the reigning interpretation among the first generation of Lincoln biographers. Ward Hill Lamon, whose *Life of Abraham Lincoln* appeared in Mary's lifetime, and William H. Herndon, whose famous biography of his law partner would be published seven years after her funeral, depicted Lincoln's marriage as a trial of conflict and woe.

Mrs. Swisshelm bent over backwards to defend Mrs. Lincoln. That was hardly inappropriate for a eulogy, of course, and it did lead her to a very interesting defense of Mrs. Lincoln's taste for finery in clothing. That had been the object of some criticism from those who thought a wartime White House should appear more Spartan and self-sacrificing. Mrs. Swisshelm insisted that Mary would gladly have joined a society against using foreign



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 2. Mrs. Lincoln as fashion plate: was finery her patriotic duty?

dress goods during the war. There were various movements among women during the Civil War to eschew finery and especially foreign-made finery in order to save money better spent for patriotic purposes. Lincoln and Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase opposed Mrs. Lincoln's participation, however, because the government needed the tariff revenue from imported goods to support the war effort. Their making the "wearing of rich clothing a patriotic duty" coincided with Mary's inclinations anyway; hence all the finery.

Two other points made by Mrs. Swisshelm were to reverberate through the Lincoln literature for a century. Mrs. Lincoln, she wrote, "was the inspiration of her husband's political career." Although Lamont spoke in a vague way of Mary's ambition as a goad to Abraham's career, Herndon was to argue quite a different thesis. To be sure, Herndon mentioned Mrs. Lincoln's ambition, but he saw the marriage as such a disastrous match that he could hardly attribute any happy consequence to it in a direct way, least of all, Lincoln's rise to the Presidency. He did, however, suggest a backhanded way in which Mary had an influence on that career: Lincoln's home life was so wretched that he tended steadily to his career rather than go home and spend time with his wife. That was probably nonsense, but Herndon was certainly correct in another judgment on his famous law partner. "His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest," Herndon said. He knew, in this case from firsthand experience, that Lincoln needed no external goad to success.

Mrs. Swisshelm was wrong, and her error was to have effects quite different from what she intended. She pointed to Mary's role with feminist pride. Later, a more sentimental public which preferred to see its political heroes as ambitionless statues, would *blame* Mary for the sin of ambition. Lincoln, they would say, had no such fault, but his wife did and drove him, a reluctant and self-effacing man, to realms of power he never lusted after himself.

Jane Grey Swisshelm had been an ardent antislavery advocate, by her own admission often critical of President Lincoln for moving too slowly against slavery. Her letter on Mary Todd Lincoln stated boldly: "In statesmanship she was farther-sighted than he [Lincoln]—was more radically opposed to slavery, and urged him to Emancipation, as a matter of right, long before he saw it as a matter of necessity." This judgment, too, was almost certainly wrong, but it has had remarkable staying power and has been given considerable prominence by those modern writers bent on reviving Mary Todd Lincoln's reputation.

The problem with the Mary Todd Lincoln-as-radical thesis, if it may be called that, is not that it misrepresents her views so much as it misrepresents their influence. The fact of the matter is that Mary's political views were so shallow and her political instincts so worthless that she had no discernible *political* influence on her husband. It is quite true that she voiced enthusiastic praise of the Emancipation Proclamation, especially when speaking to Charles Sumner, but did she ever criticize the policies of the Lincoln administration? No, and she did not influence them before the fact, either. When Lincoln was working for John C. Frémont's election in 1856, his wife was writing to a friend that she was too Southern at heart and had too much trouble with Irish servant girls to support anyone but Millard Fillmore. Fillmore was running against the ardently antislavery Frémont as both the Whig and anti-immigrant Know-Nothing candidate. Her views had no influence then, and there is not one iota of evidence to support the view that they were influential in 1862.

In the chapter about Mrs. Lincoln's growing antislavery views in Ruth Painter Randall's *Mary Lincoln: Biography of a Marriage*, Mrs. Randall quotes Mrs. Swisshelm at some length. Yet the chapter does not cite a single Mary Todd Lincoln letter written *before* Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. Because she "merged herself in her husband," as Mrs. Swisshelm saw, Mary liked her husband's proclamation, but it was *his* proclamation. It probably would not have mattered to American history had Mrs. Lincoln retained her old

Southern feeling and disliked the Emancipation Proclamation. She disliked and distrusted William H. Seward too, but Lincoln kept him on as Secretary of State throughout his administration.

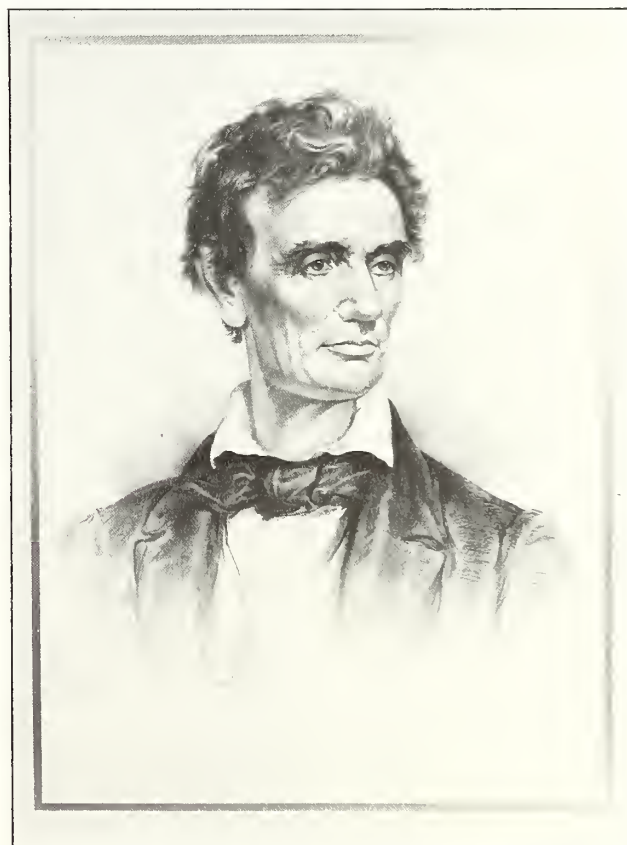
Mary Todd Lincoln should not be made the scapegoat for Lincoln's human passions, like political ambition; nor should she be credited with her husband's accomplishments, like the Emancipation Proclamation. She should be remembered as a woman who married brilliantly and who, by merging her life in her husband's, thereby touched greatness herself. After Lincoln died, greatness departed her life. Jane Grey Swisshelm knew that too. She knew that Mrs. Lincoln's life after 1865 was wretched and that Mary wanted nothing as much as she wanted to leave it behind. So Mrs. Swisshelm greeted news of her old friend's death as "sad, glad tidings."

THE PRINT THAT NEVER WAS

"If entirely agreeable to you, we should be glad of the privilege and opportunity to engrave your likeness on steel—with a view to publication of the same. . . ." So began a letter from A. H. Ritchie & Co. written to Abraham Lincoln on June 28, 1860. To interest the busy Republican Presidential nominee in their proposition, they criticized their competition:

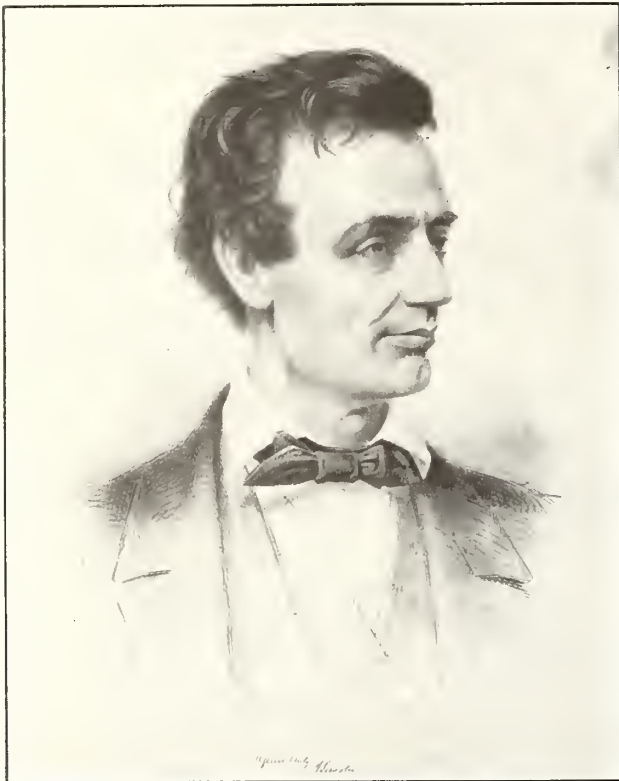
We notice that the likeness made by Mr Hicks and that by Mr Barry are both to be reproduced on stone & in the *lithographic* form. You are undoubtedly aware that a *steel plate engraving* is very much better & more desirable than a lithograph—By the first named process, is secured not only a higher degree of finish, & greater vigor & character; but much better artistic effect—

Ritchie & Co. proposed a bust portrait, about 16 by 12 inches in size.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 3. Lithograph of the Charles A. Barry portrait.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 4. Lithograph of the Thomas Hicks portrait.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

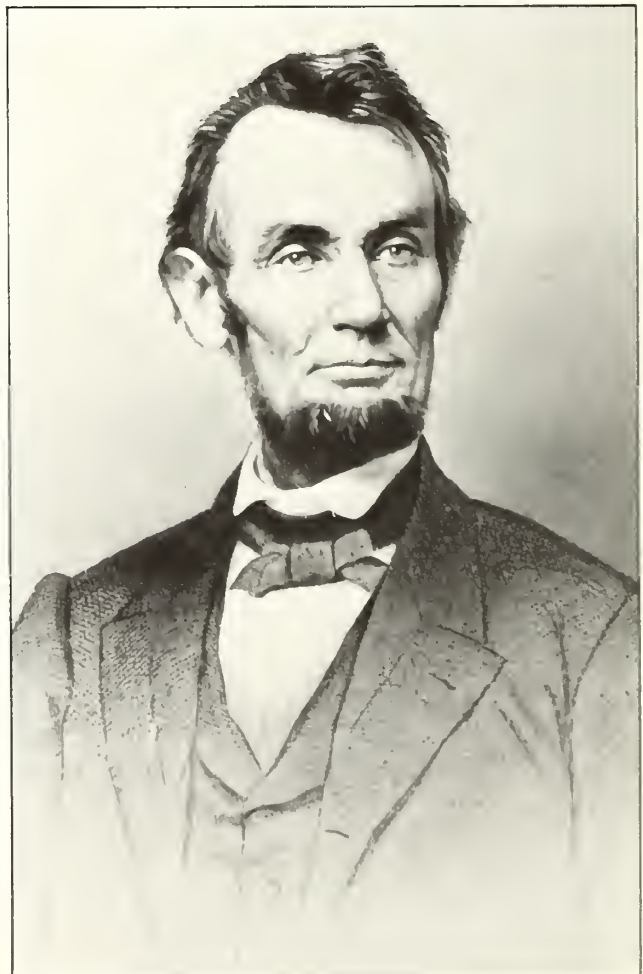
FIGURE 5. The Cooper Institute photograph, already much caricatured by June, 1860.

The engravers' problem was the lack of a model on which to base their print. "We would use [Mathew] Brady's Photographic likeness," they told Lincoln, "were it not that it has been already extensively copied & caricatured & we wish something different." They were referring to the so-called Cooper Institute photograph, taken by Brady on February 27, 1860, the day of Lincoln's famous Cooper Institute Speech. Astonishingly, that likeness already seemed common less than a month and a half after Lincoln's nomination.

The letter asked Lincoln to "get an Ambrotype or a Daguerrotype taken by one of the best operators as near you as may be convenient." The engravers enclosed instructions for the photographer and a handsome sample of their work. They also cited as references D. Appleton & Co., Booksellers & Publishers, and C. A. Dana of the New York *Tribune*. They would "guarantee that no improper use will be made of the likeness you may have sent to us."

Lincoln missed his opportunity to have the distinguished firm spread his likeness far and wide, and Ritchie & Co. missed their opportunity to cash in on the demand for portraits of the little-known Republican candidate. For some reason Lincoln did not or could not do what they wished, and the engraving company had to content itself with publishing prints of Lincoln long after he became President.

Ritchie & Co., nevertheless, did well with Lincoln's image. After his assassination they published an expensive deathbed scene and the enormously popular "First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before the Cabinet."



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 6. Ritchie finally produced a large engraving for Lincoln's second Presidential campaign.

BOOKS ABOUT MARY TODD LINCOLN

An Annotated Check-List

Compiled by
Jordan D. Fiore
Professor of History
Bridgewater State College
and
Jean F. Stonehouse
Assistant Professor of History
Bridgewater State College

Bridgewater, Massachusetts
The Authors

1982

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NOTE

A bibliography has to be a work of love, for no one ever won undying fame or great wealth in compiling one. We have prepared this checklist for presentation to members of the Lincoln Group of Boston at the 44th annual meeting of that group at Bridgewater State College on February 6, 1982.

Mary Todd Lincoln has long been an enigmatic figure, and almost every biographer of Lincoln has had a problem in trying to deal with her fairly and effectively. Only in the past half century or so have biographers been willing to undertake full-length studies of her life, and the results have ranged from harsh criticism to open adulation. Some writers have found safety in fiction and some have tried "psychography" and psychoanalysis both amateur and professional.

The best information about Mary Todd Lincoln has come from her own letters and from those who knew her personally. We feel certain that the last word has not been heard and that there will be a number of new biographies in the next few years.

We have identified thirty-six separately published works about Mary Todd Lincoln. The bibliography is not complete. There are many articles in periodicals and essays in books which should be listed in order to provide a complete bibliography. Identifying these will be our next step in preparing a complete bibliography.

Mrs. S. Mabel Bates of the Clement C. Maxwell Library at Bridgewater State College and Mrs. Carol Hanna have been

particularly helpful and we are grateful to them.

We invite comment and criticism.

J.D.F.

J.F.S.

BOOKS ABOUT MARY TODD LINCOLN

(1)

ANDERSON, LAVERE.

Mary Todd Lincoln; president's wife.

Champaign, Ill.: Garrard Publishing Co., 1975. 80 p.

A good biography for juveniles.

(2)

BABCOCK, BERNIE (SMADE).

Lincoln's Mary and the babies.

Philadelphia & London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1929. 316 p.

Although the writer shows familiarity with the source materials, she prepared a sentimentalized picture of the homes of the Lincolns in Springfield and in Washington. The book does not add much to the field of Lincolniana. There is a short bibliography (p. 315-316).

(3)

BARTON, WILLIAM ELEAZAR.

The Women Lincoln Loved.

Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, c. 1927. 377 p.

Dr. Barton examined all of the romances ascribed to Lincoln. Mary nagged Lincoln to be sure, he averred, but it was beneficial for Lincoln was a "man too fond of ease to have been successful in political life if wedded to a woman who made an ideal home," and he concluded, "In his big, undemonstrative, imperturbable way, Lincoln loved his wife and was enormously proud of her."

(4)

BASSETT, MARGARET BYRD.

Abraham & Mary Todd Lincoln.

Freeport, Me.: Bond Wheelwright [1973] 58 p.

L.C. Note. "These biographies of President and Mrs. Lincoln were previously published in the author's Profiles and portraits of American presidents and their wives; the biography of President Lincoln was also published earlier in her Profiles and portraits of American presidents.

(5)

BOYDEN, ANNA L.

Echoes from hospital and White House. A record of Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomroy's experience in war-time.

Boston: D. Lothrop and Company [1884]. 250 p.

Also published under title War reminiscences; a record of Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomroy's experience in war-time. [1887?] 250 p.

These are the recollections of Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomroy (1817-1884), who was a close friend of the Lincolns and Mrs. Lincoln's nurse.

(6)

COLVER, ANNE.

Mr. Lincoln's wife.

New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1943. 406 p.

Reprinted New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, [1965]. 363 p.

Miss Colver is POLLY ANNE (COLVER) PRAFF.

A fictionalized biography of Mary Todd Lincoln in which the author defends Mrs. Lincoln and points out the unfairness of her attackers.

(7)

CROY, HOMER.

The trial of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln.

New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1962. 148 p.

A sympathetic account of Mary Lincoln's trial for insanity in 1875. Much of the information in the book comes from contemporary newspaper accounts, and the author admits having "written dialogue for which there is no historical evidence."

(8)

Elletson, D.H.

Maryannery: Mary Ann Lincoln and Mary Anne Disraeli.

Hollywood-by-the-Sea, Fla.: Transatlantic Arts, Inc., 1960. 164 p.

(9)

EVANS, WILLIAM AUGUSTUS, M.D.

Mrs. Abraham Lincoln: a study of her personality and her influence on Lincoln.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1932. vii p., 3 l., 3-364, xiii, [1]p.

Dr. Evans uses his knowledge of medicine and psychiatry to examine Mrs. Lincoln. He does not believe that Mary had much influence on Lincoln in his White House days. He comments on Mary's seriousness, her inability to see any humor in her own and others' actions. Unable to understand other points of view, impatient with others, able to offend others easily and easily offended herself, she dwelled upon injuries, real and imagined. Given her temperament, Mary was simply overwhelmed by the series of tragedies in her life.

(10)

[FULLER, FRANK].

A day with the Lincoln family.

[New York?] [ca. 1905?] (3)p. double folder.

Monaghan's note, "The author, who met Robert Lincoln at Phillips Exeter Academy, describes a visit to Lincoln's Springfield home in July, 1860." (I, 383).

(11)

GOLTZ, CARLOS W.

Incidents in the life of Mary Todd Lincoln; containing an unpublished letter.

Sioux City, Iowa: Deitch and Lamar Co., 1928. 58 p.

This contains a poignant letter (facsimile copy) from Mary Lincoln to her Springfield neighbor Julia Isabelle Sprigg, dated May 29 1862, in which she discusses her grief over Willie's death.

GRAFF, POLLY ANNE (COLVER); see COLVER, ANNE.

(12)

HELM, KATHERINE.

The true story of Mary, wife of Lincoln, containing the recollections of Mary Lincoln's sister Emilie (Mrs. Ben Hardin Helm), extracted from her war-time diary, numerous letters and other documents now first published by her niece, Katherine Helm.

New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1928. 6 pl, 309 p.

(13)

KECKLEY, ELIZABETH.

Behind the scenes; or, Thirty years a slave, and four years in the White House.

New York: G.W. Carleton & Company, 1868. 371 p.



Reprinted 1968 by Arno Press, New York, in the series
The American Negro: his history and literature, xvi, 371 p.

Mrs. Keckley was close to Mary Lincoln, and there was mutual love and understanding. Her son was killed early in the war, and Mary mourned with her. She was Mary's comforter when Willie died. This is a valuable work for its author wrote of Mary with kindness and respect when Mary Todd Lincoln's public relations were at their worst.

(14)

KINNAIRD, VIRGINIA.

Mrs. Lincoln as a White House hostess.

Fort Wayne, Ind.: Lincolniana Publications, 1939. 26 p.

Reprinted from Papers in Illinois History and Transactions for the Year 1938.

The author concludes that Mary Lincoln was a competent and efficient hostess who served her husband and the country well.

(15)

LEWIS, MONTGOMERY SMITH.

Legends that libel Lincoln.

New York: Rinehart & Co., 1946. xiii, 339 p.

Lewis attacks many of the Lincoln legends and defends Mary Lincoln well. He denies that Mary nagged Lincoln into greatness, pointing out that she supported him "shoulder to shoulder" and was his greatest encouragement.

(16)

LINCOLN, MARY TODD.

Mary Lincoln. A letter to her cousin Elizabeth Todd Grimsby, September 29, 1861.

Privately printed for H.E. Barker, Springfield, Ill., 1917. (5) p. folds.

Published in an edition of 75 copies.

The letter deals mainly with family gossip. Mary complains of suffering from a chill and comments, "I know I have no cause to grieve over my lot-- If the country was only peaceful, all would be well." The original letter now belongs to Philip D. Sang, who published it in his article, "Mary Todd Lincoln: A Tragic Portrait" in Journal of the Rutgers University Library, April, 1961.

(17)

MARY TODD LINCOLN MEMORIAL.

New York: [1912]. 16 p.

A publication urging the erection of a memorial at Sayre College in Lexington, Kentucky.

(18)

MILLER, HELEN TOPPING .

Christmas for Tad; a story of Mary and Abraham Lincoln.

New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1956. 92 p.

Pleasant juvenile fiction; sentimental invention.

(19)

MORROW, HONORE WILLISIE.

Mary Todd Lincoln. An appreciation of the wife of Abraham Lincoln.

New York: William Morrow & Company, 1928. 248 p.

Although she stays close to historical fact and quotes extensively from written accounts, the author does invent some conversations. There is no bibliography.

(20)

OSTENDORF, LLOYD.

The photographs of Mary Todd Lincoln.

Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Historical Society, 1969 . 64 p.

Reprinted from the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, LXI, No. 3, Autumn, 1968.

The author identifies twenty-six photographs of Mary Lincoln from 1846 to 1872 and several imposter pictures of Abraham and Mary Lincoln. Each photograph is discussed separately.

(21)

PACKARD, ROY DWIGHT.

Lincoln's wife Mary: Their courtship and marriage.

Reprinted from the February, 1938, issue of the SOHIOAN Employees' Magazine, published by the Standard Oil Company of Ohio. (6) p.

(22)

RANDALL, RUTH PAINTER.

The Courtship of Mr. Lincoln.

Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1957. 219 p.

A good account of Abraham Lincoln's courtship of "Molly Todd," told in part through the use of contemporary letters. As always in Mrs. Randall's works, Mary is presented in the best light.

(23)

RANDALL, RUTH PAINTER.

I, Mary; a biography of the girl who married Abraham Lincoln. Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown & Company, [1959]. xii, 242 p.

A book for young readers based on her Mary Lincoln; biography of a marriage (q.v.). There is no bibliography.

(24)

RANDALL, RUTH PAINTER.

Mary Lincoln; biography of a marriage.

Boston: Little, Brown & Company, [c. 1953]. xiv, 399 p.

A very sympathetic account of Lincoln's wife and their home life. The work is well-documented and contains an excellent bibliography of original and secondary sources, found on p. 517-529.

(25)

RHODES, JAMES A. and DEAN JAUCHIUS.

The trial of Mary Todd Lincoln.

Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1959. 300 p.

In this fictionalized account, the authors reconstruct the sanity hearings of 1875 and conclude that Mary Lincoln was not actually insane but was railroaded into an insane asylum with the connivance of her relatives for family and political reasons.

(26)

ROSS, ISHBEL.

The President's wife: Mary Todd Lincoln; a biography.

New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons [1973]. 378 p.

A strongly written account of Mary Todd Lincoln's life, sometimes sympathetic and sometimes harsh toward the central

(22)

RANDALL, JOHN

The President's

Secretary

A good record

of service

is shown

in the

(23)

RANDALL, JOHN

The President's

Secretary

A good record

of service

(24)

RANDALL, JOHN

The President's

Secretary

A good record

of service

(25)

RANDALL, JOHN

The President's

Secretary

A good record

of service

is shown

in the

(26)

ROSS, JAMES

The President's

Secretary

A good record

of service

is shown

in the

character. In the concluding chapter, "Lincoln Alone Understands," she writes

. . . the disasters of Mary Lincoln's life have been made the apologia for the extraordinary course she followed and the persistence of her image in the popular consciousness. To accept an encompassing verdict of insanity in her case is to exceed all and in a sense to discount her remarkable gifts as an individual. But her attacks were intermittent, and her eccentricities were only a small part of her story, which was rich in all the elements of human drama, stark and terrible though the manifestations were.

The book contains an excellent chapter-by-chapter bibliography.

(27)

SANDBURG, CARL and PAUL M. ANGLE.

Mary Lincoln, wife and widow.

Part I by Carl Sandburg; part II, letters, documents, and appendix by Paul M. Angle.

New York: Harcourt and Company, [c. 1932]. xiv, 357 p.

Part I by Carl Sandburg is a romantic biography and is pure Sandburgiana. Part II is a valuable sampling of Mrs. Lincoln's letters and articles about her. When this book was first printed (1932), it was the best compilation of original sources of information about Mary Todd Lincoln.

(28)

SIMMONS, DAWN LANGLEY.

A rose for Mrs. Lincoln; a biography of Mary Todd Lincoln.

Boston: Beacon Press [1970]. x, 197 p.

A warm and turbulent biography of Mrs. Lincoln from her aristocratic childhood and youth in Kentucky, through her married years in Springfield, the turbulent years in the White House, and her tragic later life.

(29)

STODDARD, WILLIAM O.

Inside the White House in War Times.

New York: C.L. Webster & Co., 1890. 244 p.

Although this book deals mainly with the politics and other events of the war period, there are a number of favorable

comments on Mary Lincoln, whom Stoddard served part-time as personal secretary.

(30)

STOLTZ, CHARLES.

The tragic career of Mary Todd Lincoln.

South Bend, Ind.: Privately Printed. The Round Table, 1931.
62 p.

(31)

STONE, IRVING.

Love is eternal; a novel about Mary Todd Lincoln and Abraham Lincoln.

Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1954. 468 p.

One of the best fictionalized accounts of the last twenty-five years of Lincoln's life, this book contains the story of his courtship and marriage, in which Mary is exonerated of any wrongdoing and is presented as a steady, sensitive, devoted wife and mother, whose sole object in life was to please and advance her husband. There is some dependence upon Sandburg's account and the author knows the background of the period very well.

(32)

TOWNSEND, WILLIAM HENRY.

Lincoln and his wife's home town.

Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, [c. 1929]. 402 p.

In this book the author proves to be an excellent historian of Lexington, Kentucky, shows an outstanding knowledge of the Todd family, and has a great appreciation for Lincoln's worth. He combines all of these factors to write an excellent account of Mary Todd's youth, of slavery in Kentucky, and the effect that Lincoln's knowledge of Lexington had on his actions and attitudes.

(33)

TURNER, JUSTIN G. and LINDA LOVITT TURNER.

Mary Todd Lincoln; her life and letters

With an introduction by Fawn M. Brodie.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972. xv, 750, xxxvi p.

An excellent biography is interwoven with Mary Lincoln's letters. The result is a warm, sympathetic picture. Turner is an outstanding collector of Lincolniana. Undoubtedly this is the single most valuable book on Mary Todd Lincoln. The

documentation and bibliography are a goldmine for historians,
for the location of all letters is indicated.

(34)

WALLACE, MRS. FRANCES [TODD].

Lincoln's marriage: newspaper interview
Springfield, Illinois, September 2, 1895.
Springfield ? Privately Printed, 1917.

(35)

WARREN, LOUIS AUSTIN.

The woman in Lincoln's life, with special emphasis on her
cultural attainments.

Louisville: The Filson Club, 1946. 13 p.

Reprinted from the Filson Club Quarterly for July, 1946.

This favorable study of Mrs. Lincoln stresses her early
education and training and reveals her as a well trained and
well informed woman in her day.

(36)

WILKIE, KATHLEEN ELLIOT.

Mary Todd Lincoln, girl of the Bluegrass.

Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1954.

A juvenile biography.

document
for the

(20)
WALLS

WALLS

WALLS

WALLS

Top parapsychologists awed by ghostly contact with Mrs. Lincoln



STARTLING claims that the ghost of Abraham Lincoln's widow communicated with a medium have been probed by two world-famous parapsychologists.

Amazingly, their report concluded that the characteristics exhibited by the ghost fit Mrs. Lincoln.

In December, 1976, an inner voice instructed Margo Williams, an experienced medium, to sit down and write everything the voice commanded.

"My name is Mary," the ghostly voice began. "My husband's portrait hangs in many frames. Before marriage I was Mary Todd."

For almost four months, Mary Todd Lincoln's eerie voice spoke through Mrs. Williams, dictating a mind-boggling total of 55 scripts.

Mary Lincoln spoke of in-

BY PHIL BRENNAN

cidents which are known to have occurred, and she discussed characters such as Nancy Hanks, and General U.S. Grant.

In one chilling episode, Mrs. Lincoln described the dread scene of her husband's assassination — in a box at Ford's Theater.

"... There was a shot ... blood, blood, blood, mixed with heavy perfume. My life was ruined forever by that awful noise. The screaming went on and on ... it was the end of happiness and power ... then 16 horses and a ... hearse... many memories."

Amazingly, Mrs. Lincoln openly discussed her well-known bad temper, and the fact that she was forever scheming, and making her husband's life miserable. She provided a sad picture of her stormy life with Lincoln.

She repented these faults bitterly, however. Time after time her eerie voice, choked with remorse, "I should have been sweeter..."

Dr. Ian Stevenson, America's top parapsychologist, joined with England's Professor John Belfoff, in visits to the Isle of Wight, where Margo Williams lives. Belfoff actually attended sessions and watched Mrs. Williams take dictation from Mary Lincoln's ghostly voice.

The report later issued by the two experts concluded that the characterization attributed by the ghost to Mary Lincoln was "historically accurate," and squared with what historians know of the woman.

Scuba Granny makes a splash

7
11

Goucher historian Jean Baker tackles Abe Lincoln's much-maligned widow

By James H. Bready

Jean Baker may be the only person in a long way around who takes notice of both Lincolns' birthdays. That's Abraham Lincoln's, in February, and Mary Todd Lincoln's, a week from Tuesday. Mrs. Lincoln herself, ironically, wouldn't be pleased at mention of her age (165); during her lifetime, she was found subtracting two, and later on four, years from her total.

Baker, a professor of history at Goucher College who while on sabbatical is writing a new biography of the widow of that most admirable of U.S. presidents, went to Lexington, Ky., for a look at the scenes of Mary Todd's childhood. At the fami-



MARY TODD LINCOLN

Books and authors

ly cemetery plot, she came upon the gravestone of Mary Todd's father's second wife, and smiled — no birth date.

If one of Mrs. Lincoln's foibles was common to the era, what of the others? The Nineteenth Century accused her of profligate spending, self-absorption and shrewishness. Congress begrudged her a pension; her own son had her committed to a private sanitarium. Memoirists and historians have lambasted Mrs. Lincoln for her White House levees during wartime, her southern mannerisms and, always, her occasional spree shopping.

Baker, whose previous books have dealt with the politics of mid-1800s America (her "Affairs of Party," about the North's anti-Lincoln Democrats, was published by Cornell University Press last spring), does not make light of her subject's personality difficulties, following childhood neglect. Reared by an unsympathetic stepmother in a household of a dozen or more children, Mary Todd emerged with a defensive-combative demeanor. But, particularly during the 17 years of her widowhood, was there clinical evidence that would lead late-Twentieth-century psychiatrists to classify her as deranged?

At this point, with a way still to go in research and writing, Baker says no. Along with examining various Lincoln-era documents not available to previous writers in the field, she has been interviewing

scientists whose specialty is mental disorders, with leads provided by her husband R. Robinson Baker, a Johns Hopkins Hospital surgeon.

Besides being there at her husband's death, besides facing open hostility from her first-born, Robert, Mary Todd Lincoln also watched her other three sons die, at varying ages (of afflictions that modern medicine could have relieved). Melodramatic by nature, she was a neurotic mourner, with interludes of melancholy. But this was stress that would have propelled many a present-day spouse and parent straight out into the void.

On the plus side, Baker finds, Mrs. Lincoln was competent and reliable at child-rearing; understanding, intelligent and sophisticated as the wife of a self-made man entering politics (whose electoral aspirations she apparently heightened by her timely prodding). Their life together in Springfield, Ill., from her marriage in 1842 to a man almost 10 years older than she, to their departure for Washington in 1861, went well.

Baker has gone not only to Springfield and other midwestern

Todd-Lincoln sites, but earlier this year was in Pau, Frankfurt and other European centers where the president's relict and other gentry congregated for sulfur baths. Mrs. Lincoln had no home after the White House, moved restlessly from hotel to hotel, was more vulnerable than ever when, in 1871, her youngest son Tad died. Robert Todd Lincoln meantime feared lest his mother's bills wipe out his future inheritance, or bring creditors to his door.

Writing biography, with its different perspectives and values, is a new experience for Jean Baker. But at Goucher, where she is the only faculty member to have won both the prestige awards (for excellence in teaching 1980, for outstanding research 1981), the feeling is that Professor Baker — whose own four children already spread, on the career grid, from undergraduate college on up to active law practice — can do anything she sets her mind to. Is it practicable, for today's tall, blond and lean Maryland-born academic to undertake a reconstruction of the goals and the griefs in long ago's short, dark and stout antebellum belle? Just watch.

Back at Calvert School, as Jean Harvey, she was struck by her classmates' unwillingness, in plays involving Lincoln, to take on the role of the maligned Mrs. Lincoln. Who indeed would be Xanthippe to history's and philosophy's Socrates? Funny thing, about the sharp-tongued woman who kept reminding the great man of daily practicalities — no woman ever recorded their lives, or no woman's version has survived.

At other campuses, history has been reported somewhat sickly. At Goucher, where Jean Baker and Julie Roy Jeffrey double-teach an introductory course in U.S. history that culminates in an ardent town meeting, history pulses. And in high schools, history may pick up when Johns Hopkins University Press publishes the multiple-author 1607-1976 textbook that is one of its most interesting back-room projects. Its Civil War is told by Jean Baker.

Good historians don't take sides; they probe, ask, sift, listen, analyze, discern (this one, on legal pads) — and, now and then, give valiant support to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Woman's simple morality

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(AFTER ALL, WHY SHOULD GEORGE AND ABE ALWAYS GET THE SPOTLIGHT?)



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Did Lincoln enjoy luxury?

His wife certainly did

Was the rail splitter and self-taught lawyer who became our 16th president a man of simple tastes as folklore tells us?

Archeologists have found fine glassware and ceramic pieces while studying garbage thrown away about 140 years ago at Abraham Lincoln's home in Springfield, Ill.

Floyd Mansberger, a researcher with the National Park Service at the Springfield home, said, "Though he was touted as a very conservative person who didn't buy fancy things, the ceramic objects were those of a very wealthy individual. That's the kind of folk belief that archeologists can set straight."

Lincoln was never the poverty-stricken failure of legend, but I doubt he appreciated the worth of "fancy things." His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, had been used to having "the best" all of her life. Her father was a lawyer and a banker. He owned a luxurious home in Lexington, Ky., where she grew up.

In Lexington, Mary's home is furnished today as it was when she lived there. Her bedroom is entirely in white. The exception is the multicolored carpet made of blocks, about a foot square, each handwoven by a different woman, then put together to form thick, soft, pastel carpeting. There are pieces of fine porcelain among the toilet articles in the Lexington home, including a pale green Rosenthal

In the White House, Mary redecorated and hid the cost of her extravagance from Lincoln.

She insisted on having things that were the best and most lavish. Plates of the imported china she used in the White House were surrounded by a wide royal-purple band, finished with 24-karat gold edging. In the center of the plate was a replica of the seal of the United States, with an eagle flying among the clouds.

For 20 years Lincoln practiced law in Springfield while riding Illinois' old Eighth Judicial Circuit, which at its largest included 15 counties and covered 8,000 square miles. He didn't make much at first, and he often persuaded clients to settle out of court. That meant he got little or no fee. But Lincoln prospered as he began representing corporations and big businesses; he soon was earning about \$1,200 a year, the same amount paid the Illinois governor at the time. He received his largest fee, \$5,000, for defending the Illinois Central Railroad in a tax case. He was far from a poor man when he became president, but he wasn't rich.

True, Lincoln began his life in a log cabin, but there was nothing unusual about that. Many families lived in log cabins in the early 1800s, and the Lincolns lived as comfortably as most of their neighbors.

Before archeologists go "setting the record straight" about Lincoln being a man of luxury, they should remember his wife. Mary Lincoln was high-strung, socially ambitious and disposed to gracious and expensive living.

Thalia Woods Millan of Orlando is a former lecturer at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Lincoln City, Ind.

My Word / Thalia Woods Millan

SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL



hat pin holder, decorated with pink roses, that today would be a highly prized antique.

Because Mary grew up accustomed to the luxuries of her day, she tried to maintain a similar lifestyle wherever she lived.

In Springfield, the Lincolns lived modestly but comfortably. He bought the plain white frame house in 1844, where he and his family lived until he became president in 1861.

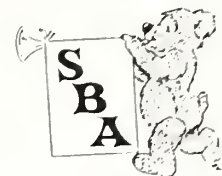
The fine glass, bits of porcelain and pieces of china found in the garbage pits at the home could have been gifts from Mary's wealthy family and friends, or she might have purchased them herself.

The Orlando Sentinel

Friday, September 27, 1985

Bedan Bruit

St. Bede Academy



Mary Todd Lincoln — a spendthrift in her time

By Norah Gillhouse

Mary Todd Lincoln was an extravagant spender who loved to shop. Through her years in the White House until her death, she was widely criticized by the press and the American public. To the American public, spending huge sums of money for clothes and furnishings while the country was at war was unforgivable.

Born to Eliza Parker Todd and Robert Todd on Dec. 13, 1818, Mary was christened Mary Ann Todd. Her father was a wealthy hanker in Lexington, Ky. She was the fourth of seven children. She had two older sisters, Elizabeth and Frances, and an older brother named Levi. Her younger sister Ann was born in 1820, and she had two younger brothers, Robert, and George Rogers Clark.

Mary's mother died a day after the birth of her last son, when Mary was only six years old. Her father remarried only 17 months later to a Frankfort woman named Elizabeth Humphreys, who gave birth to nine more children, but only eight lived. This was a traumatic experience for the young girl who would go on to marry a man who would be the president of the United States.

Mary, even as a young girl, had a craving for beautiful clothes, according to the book, *Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Her Letters*, by Justin G. Turner and Linda L. Turner.

She hated the little dresses worn by the young girls in her day and, above all else, she wanted a set of hoops. It was impossible and her parents refused her request. So she and another friend of hers set out to make themselves a set of hoops. On the following Sunday morning she was forced to go and change. Mary was crushed.

AS A TEEN-AGER Mary was a social butterfly, she was full of energy and loved balls and parties. Mary had wide-set blue eyes, long luxuriant chestnut hair, a small upturned nose and a soft, rosy complexion. She had a large prominent chin and a small stern mouth.

It was at one of the balls in Springfield that she met Abraham Lincoln, a future president of the United States.

On the evening of Nov. 4, 1842, Mary and Abraham stood before an Episcopalian minister, Dr. Charles Dresser, and repeated their vows. Lin-

coln had the words "Love is Eternal" inscribed in Mary's wedding band. There was no honeymoon trip for the couple.

On Feb. 11, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was elected to this nation's highest office, the presidency of the United States.

Upon arriving at the White House, Mary decided the house needed a major overhaul and set about her task. Mary remarked that the family quarters on the second floor were abominable. She threw out much of the older furniture and decided to begin fresh. Congress also agreed that the house was in need of improvements and voted for an appropriation fund of \$20,000.

With the war beginning, Abraham was called upon to shoulder the heavy burdens of war. Mary, meanwhile, had begun to spend with abandon. She felt that the president's family should in no way live life as peasants. Throughout all of Mary's years in the White House, she was always heavily criticized about her spending. In a time of war when the troops had little food and few blankets, Mary was picking china patterns for the White House.

Mary traveled around the country shopping from New York to Boston and Philadelphia. She purchased Haviland china sets, silver plates, cashmere shawls, bell-pulls, draperies, hooks, ornately carved furniture, wallpaper, and custom-made carpeting. She modernized the house and put gaslight in every room. By the time Mary stopped to check how much of the sum Congress had allowed her, she realized she had exceeded the sum by \$6,700.

Always aware of changing styles, Mary became close friends with her dressmakers and hat-makers. A former slave, Elizabeth Keckley, who was employed as her dressmaker, became her closest friend and confidante.

Shopkeepers around the country knew well of Mary's passion for only the finest of things. She had large bills run up at many stores and was constantly in debt.

Balls and parties had always been a large part of Washington D.C. society and Mary always wanted to look her best. Her dresses were made of silks, satins, laces and ribbons. She also adored expensive gloves, and bought them in multiple orders. She once ordered 84 pairs at once.

Her large debts began to weigh heavily on Mary. With the election approaching, she became intensely nervous. She confided to Elizabeth that she owed over \$27,000.

If Abraham did not win the election, the hills would begin to come in and Mary would have to face her greatest fear — her husband finding out the truth about her reckless spending. After Lincoln's re-election, however, Mary began to relax and purchased an inaugural gown for \$2,000, very expensive for those days.

On the night of April 14, 1876, while attending "Our American Cousin," at the Ford Theatre, Abraham Lincoln was shot, and died the next morning. Mary's son Robert led her home. She was so crushed that she was unable to attend the wake or the funeral.

When Mary began to pack her things to move to Chicago with her sons Robert and Tad, she had over 60 crates which contained her clothing and personal effects.

The first year after Abraham's death was extremely difficult for what remained of the Lincoln family. Not only were they in mourning over the death of husband and father, but the youngest son Tad died that year, and the family was short of money.

Mary was denied a pension in light of her terrible spending during her days in the White House, and the family was forced to live in three rooms in a boarding house.

Mary still owed thousands of dollars and was embarrassed by her poverty. She received only \$1,500-\$1,800 a year from the stocks and bonds which Abraham had purchased. She schemed and begged in order to pay for her great debts.

In September of 1867, Mary decided she could no longer wait and must sell her wardrobe. She traveled to New York where she found a firm that would sell her wardrobe for her.

Mary was concerned about the anonymity of the transaction, but the firm believed that in order to get a high price for her wardrobe, they would have to capitalize on her name. She never received the estimated high sum or anything close to it.

Mary continued to live off other's charity until her death on July 15, 1882, at the age of 64.



The penitential season begins

The penitential and reflective season of Lent began on Ash Wednesday as blessed ashes were placed on the foreheads of students and staff members of the Academy, as a sign of God's forgiveness for those who turn away from their sins.

St. Bede to host regional

By Jeff Fabish

St. Bede Academy will be the host of the 1989 boys basketball regional tournament, Feb. 20-24.

Seven teams will play in the tournament, including Princeton, DePue, Hall, Putnam County, Henry, Senachwine, Sparland and host St. Bede.

Seeded first is Princeton, followed by DePue, Hall, St. Bede, Putnam County, Henry and Sparland.

The pairings go as follows:

Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m. — St. Bede vs. Sparland;

Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. —

Putnam County vs. DePue;

Feb. 21 — Hall vs. Henry.

Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. — Princeton vs. St. Bede Sparland winner;

Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m. — Putnam County DePue winner vs. Hall Henry winner;

Feb. 24 at 7:30 p.m. — competition of winners in the finals.

"We are going to play hard, we have worked hard all year to get to the regional and now we are here," commented Coach Ken Anderson.



The Sad Journey of Mary Todd Lincoln

BY BOB FROST

Most Americans were not exactly overwhelmed with grief when Mary Todd Lincoln died in 1882. In fact, as her casket was inserted into a granite vault in Springfield, Illinois, a common feeling in the country was "Good riddance." She was regarded by many as a sharp-tongued shrew, and a disgrace to the hallowed memory of her late husband, President Abraham Lincoln.

Mary Lincoln led an unhappy life, and she doled out her unhappiness to others. But it could be said she had her reasons, some of which had to do with the restricted place of women in 19th-century America.

Mary Todd was born in Lexington, Kentucky, on December 13, 1818, the third of six children of Robert Todd and Eliza Parker Todd, both of whom had distinguished forebears. Mary grew up knowing that the Todds and the Parkers were socially prominent in Kentucky, and this shaped her outward sense of confidence and bravado.

But in other ways, Mary was seriously deprived and insecure. When she was 6 years old her mother died of an infection related to childbirth. Robert Todd soon married again, and had eight more children with his new wife,

Elizabeth (Betsey) Humphreys. Betsey was despised by all the Todd children. Mary especially felt abandoned and vulnerable, and she would bear these deep emotional scars for life.

One place she found solace was school, which she loved. Sometimes she ran as fast as she could to class, eager to get started, and she'd stay up late at night studying by candlelight. Mary had a head on her shoulders, liked to speak her mind, and was fascinated by current events. But for all of her potential, she had no opportunity for a career; proper young Southern ladies in the 1830s simply did *not* work. The only acceptable life option was marriage.



A photograph of the Lincolns from the Smithsonian Institution

By 1839, Mary, now 20, was living with her sister Elizabeth in Springfield, and actively looking for a suitable husband. She met a 30-year-old lawyer and state legislator named Abraham Lincoln. He was rather ugly at first sight. In fact, Mary's sister Frances scorned him as the plainest-looking man in Springfield. Furthermore, he was a backwoods type with a hick accent—he said “cheer” for “chair.” He didn’t seem the sort for a pretty, dainty, and ambitious Southern blue blood. But Mary Todd had spotted something in Abraham Lincoln, a certain air of drama and destiny.

The couple grew increasingly fond of one another. When Mary sat and conversed with Abe, his plain features seemed to disappear. “His heart,” she once said, “is as large as his arms are long.” She enjoyed talking; he liked to listen and ponder. As her sister Elizabeth observed, “Lincoln would listen and gaze on her as if drawn by some superior power.” Mary’s liveliness was a ray of sunshine to Abe’s melancholy soul, while his strength helped her feel secure. They both shared a love for politics, and, unlike most men of his time, Abe viewed women as equal in many ways to men. Despite a bumpy courtship—his cold feet, her flirtations with other men—Mary and Abe were married on November 4, 1842.

The new Mrs. Lincoln had grand plans: With her help, she felt, her husband could become president of the United States. Knowing that her best chance of making a mark on the world was through him, she became Abe’s essential political partner. She spurred him on in times of defeat and depression, critiqued his speeches, entertained his cronies, and helped him rise to prominence in the new Republican Party. The telling phrase she used to describe his progress was “our own political advancement.” Indeed, as historian Paul Johnson asserts, “The likelihood is that he would never have become President without her.”

The Lincoln home from 1844–1861 was a comfortable clapboard structure at the corner of Eighth and Jackson in Springfield. Abe was on the road a lot, lawyering and politicking, and Mary raised four young boys pretty much on her own: Robert, Edward, William, and Thomas (called Tad). She was a good mother in many ways, says historian Jean H. Baker in her definitive 1987 biography of Mary, but she held her children excessively close. Baker says Mary was “anxiously attached” to the little Lincolns, using them as “shields for her own vulnerability.” How much more cruel the blow, then, in



Mary Todd Lincoln's earliest known photograph

1850 when 3-year-old Eddie died of tuberculosis after 52 days of suffering. Mary’s shield was cracked. Her grief was immeasurable.

Problems and stress plagued Mary throughout the decade. She felt endless anguish over Eddie and worried compulsively about her other boys. She still carried unresolved feelings of abandonment and anger from her own youth. She experienced significant health problems, including allergies, crippling headaches, and gynecological difficulties from the arduous delivery of Tad in 1853. Her bad temper became notorious in Springfield. Historian David Herbert Donald writes that she was known for giving “tongue-lashings...to maids, to workmen about the house, to street vendors—and to her husband.” Meanwhile, her role as Abe’s political partner, while satisfying in

Mary became notorious in Springfield for her bad temper.



The President and Mrs. Lincoln with sons Tad (left) and Robert

some ways, was always in shadow to *his* career. She knew that her status was secondhand.

Mary lacked a deep religious faith that might have helped her cope with these problems. She found some comfort from spiritualism, a great fad of the day in which spirits of the dead were called forth by mediums, but she was unable to fully heal. By the end of the decade Mary Lincoln was brittle.

Still, she felt her burdens lift in the ecstasy of her husband's presidential campaign and victory in 1860. Since childhood, the wounded little girl inside of her had craved attention, and at age 41, she was now going to have the national spotlight upon her. She would be "first lady" of the land—a title coined by a British reporter to describe her.

The White House turned out to be a nightmare. The Civil War began on April 12, 1861, shortly after Abraham Lincoln assumed the presidency, and cast a terrible pall over the family, the capital, and the nation. The President was totally preoccupied with the conflict and Mary became a spectator to his labors, a political partner no more. She poured her energies into entertaining and redecorating the White House (earning much criticism for her extravagance) and visiting hospitals and reviewing the Union troops (more criticism, as she was a Southerner and accused of sympathy for the Confederate cause). Mary needed more fulfilling work, but she did not get it.

And there was so much death. Mary lost several relatives and friends to the war. And in February 1862 she lost her favorite son, 11-year-old Willie, to typhoid fever. After this tragedy, Mary simply stopped functioning. She stayed in her bed for weeks and suspended all social activities at the White House for months, demonstrating to the world how "special" was her pain. But thousands of families were losing loved ones in battle, and they

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HISTORY Mary Todd Lincoln

The Ghost in the Lincoln Bedroom

You think it would be an honor to sleep in the Lincoln Bedroom? Consider this: Rumor has it that the bed is lumpy, even though Barbara Bush replaced the original horsehair mattress. But you probably wouldn't get too much sleep anyway—the place is haunted.



- Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower perceived Lincoln's towering presence in the room.
- Eleanor Roosevelt, working late at night, would often "get a feeling that someone was standing behind me. I'd have to turn around and look."
- Winston Churchill was rumored to have sighted Lincoln's ghost in the room.
- Ronald Reagan's dog refused to enter the Lincoln Bedroom and would stand outside it, barking. Reagan's daughter, Maureen, said she saw apparitions in the room.
- When actor Richard Dreyfuss slept in the room, he said the portrait of Lincoln gave him a nightmare.
- Numerous White House staff members over the years have said that they've seen Lincoln's ghost. Capricia Marshall, President Clinton's White House social secretary, said, "A high percentage of people who work here won't go into the Lincoln Bedroom."
- Actually, the Lincoln Bedroom was never Lincoln's bedroom. He used it as his study and Cabinet room, and it was there that he signed the historic Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. In 1945, however, the Trumans named it the Lincoln Bedroom and added the 8' x 6' ornately carved rosewood bed that Mary Todd Lincoln had so extravagantly—and against her husband's wishes—purchased during a White House refurbishment. Lincoln was laid to rest in that bed after his assassination.
- Lincoln's belongings, such as various portraits, chairs, and a desk, remain in the room. As does, many say, his restless spirit.

resented her apparent belief that she had a unique claim on suffering.

The decisive blow to Mary's emotional equilibrium came the evening of April 14, 1865, when she witnessed the assassination of her husband at Ford's Theatre. She barely held on to her sanity. She became a "professional widow" and victim, dressing in black for the remaining 17 years of her life and obsessing grandiosely about her dead husband. Her level of self-absorption was reflected in her comment, "No such sorrow was ever visited upon a people or family." Mary also had some embarrassing money problems. Her attempt to publicly sell her fancy clothes, furs, and jewelry was criticized as greedy and vulgar. She also begged rich friends to raise funds for her. Though she needed to live modestly she was not destitute, so her claims of poverty contributed to her unpopularity.

And her heartaches continued. Tad, her beloved son and traveling companion, died of lung disease in 1871 at the age of 18. "Ill luck presided at my birth and has been a faithful attendant ever since," said a devastated Mary. A few years later she became

alienated from Robert, her eldest and only remaining child. Robert felt his eccentric mother was a danger to herself and to the family name, and—not necessarily in this order—that she was squandering his potential inheritance. So in 1875 he petitioned the courts to have her institutionalized for lunacy. This was trumped-up nonsense, but in those days it was not difficult for men to get rid of troublesome women. Mary was found guilty by an all-male jury and confined to an asylum near Chicago, but was rescued after nearly four humiliating months by a lawyer named Myra Bradwell. A year later, another jury declared her "restored to reason." Mary went to Europe for several years, eventually returning to Springfield for the last two years of her life.

She never forgave Robert for taking legal action against her, and as a result, historian Baker notes, she "ended her life childless." On July 16, 1882, Mary Todd Lincoln died at age 63, partially paralyzed, nearly blind, drugged on patent medicines, and as lonely as she had been as a little girl in Lexington.

BOB FROST IS A CONTRIBUTING EDITOR TO BIOGRAPHY MAGAZINE.

THE SAGA OF MARY TODD

Lincoln's wife was a full political partner.
That's only one reason why she was despised

By WALTER KIRN

FEW PATTERNS IN AMERICAN history have proved as durable as this one: while Presidents are attacked by their opponents for what they do or fail to do, First Ladies are disparaged for who they are. What's more, the unattractive traits that presidential spouses have been assigned don't seem to change. They're vain and frivolous (Jacqueline Kennedy in her designer gowns). They're pushy and calculating (Hillary Clinton and her health-care plan). They're irrational and superstitious (Nancy Reagan and her astrologer).

Or they're all of the above—and loony too. That was Mary Todd Lincoln's uniquely miserable lot: to be despised in nearly every way that a First Lady is capable of being despised, both during her lifetime and ever since, while suffering in nearly every way that a human being can suffer. The fact that Mary was married to a President who has been admired in nearly every way that a President can be admired has never helped matters any. It may have sealed her fate.

"The most charitable construction that Mary Lincoln's friends can put on her strange course is that she is insane," wrote the *Chicago Journal* of the widow who, in the wake of her husband's assassination, had returned to Illinois in a state of conspicuous mourning that drew the opposite of public sympathy, particularly when she tried to raise money by selling off her fanciest clothes at auction. When Robert, the only one of her four sons whom she hadn't had to bury before his time, committed his aging mother to an asylum while taking control of her assets and affairs, Mary's humiliation was complete.

What did she do to deserve such vilification? As her modern biographers have pointed out, Mary Todd Lincoln's greatest sin, perhaps, was to be born in the wrong



BLIND AMBITION The First Lady in her Inaugural gown, 1861

century. The daughter of a prominent Kentucky family whose mother died when she was just a girl, Mary was a bright, well-educated woman who dared to involve herself in her husband's career. In 1847, when Abraham Lincoln traveled to Washington to take his seat as a newly elected Illinois Congressman, Mary had the presumption to accompany him—an unusual move for a political wife back then. She was on a mission, though. Having already tutored her mate in the fine points of proper manners and dress ("I do not think he knew pink from blue when I married him," she once told her sister), she made no secret of her ambition to see him ascend to the presidency one day. Later, during Lincoln's unsuccessful campaign for the Senate, Mary monitored his treatment by the press, lobbied on his behalf and cheered him on during his last public skirmish with Stephen Douglas, one of her rejected romantic suitors.

Once the Lincolns relocated to the

White House, Mary made a grievous public-relations error that later First Ladies such as Nancy Reagan might have been wise to remember: she redecorated, expensively, extensively and—in the eyes of many—frivolously. Despite a historical catastrophe (the Civil War), Mary dedicated her formidable energies to buying china, ordering wallpaper, updating her wardrobe and bringing good taste and material splendor to a dowdy, poorly maintained residence whose appearance a White House secretary compared to that of "an old and unsuccessful hotel."

But America wasn't ready for Camelot, and Mary was cast as an out-of-touch princess who picked fabric swatches while, on the battlefield, the Republic burned. Yet perhaps no woman in American history had a better excuse for trying to boost her mood with a little retail therapy. Mary had already lost a mother and a son, and was about to lose another son, as well as her husband. She seemed to know that too, possibly as a result of her excursions into the mysterious spirit world, a popular pastime in the traumatized living rooms of the Civil War. Seeking comfort wherever she could find it, Mary switched off the lights and called her period's version of a psychic hotline.

Smart, ambitious women who love to shop, have difficulty stick-

ing to a budget and react to emotional upheaval by dabbling in New Age spirituality don't attract much attention nowadays. If eventually they become fond of prescription medications, as her best modern biographer Jean H. Baker believes that Mary did (thereby clearing the way for Betty Ford), they may even have a rehab center named after them.

Mary Todd Lincoln had no such luck, though—except, of course, to become the negative role model for every First Lady ever since and also, perhaps, for the First Husbands of tomorrow. If Mary's tortured ghost (and she believed in ghosts—they were among her only companions at the end) could offer those First Spouses any advice, it might come down to this: Stay in the background, avoid having your fortune told and don't—at least not before speaking to your spouse—purchase new clothes or change the White House wallpaper. Your nation may soften its view of you someday, but it could take a long, long time. ■

Ancestry.com Boosts Database With Census

June 22, 2006 - 12:36PM

An Internet company is adding U.S. Census records to boost its archive of searchable names to 5 billion, which it says is the most comprehensive genealogical database ever compiled.

Ancestry.com planned to announce Thursday that it has copied complete census records from 1790 to 1930, making it the only searchable, online repository of the documents.

The U.S. government waits 72 years before releasing original census documents. Copying the material took a team of experts and workers a combined 6.6 million hours of labor, Ancenstry.com said.

Workers deciphered the handwriting on millions of census forms, then indexed and cataloged every name, and scanned images of the census documents.

The material, which will be shown on the Web site starting Thursday, includes 13 million original census images scanned and transcribed from 15,000 rolls of microfilm.


The project added 540 million names, increasing the company's genealogical database to 600 terabytes of data. A terabyte equals a thousand billion bytes.

"We are just beginning to scratch the surface in terms of the amount of content we can offer and the millions of people all over the globe we can connect," chief executive Tim Sullivan said.

The information details people's moves across the country, their race, marital status, assets, residence, schooling and other personal information.

Ruth Carr, department chief of local history and genealogy at the New York Public Library, said researchers have had to work with "thousands of reels of microfilm."

"With the digitization of the census, it is now possible for someone to type a name in the search box, and within seconds view the image of the actual census page," she said.

The records revealed some quirks. For instance, Abraham Lincoln's wife, Mary, reported growing only seven years older between the 1850 and the 1860 census. 

Ancestry.com, which claims more than 725,000 paid subscribers, is part of a network of Web sites owned by MyFamily.com Inc.

On the Net:

<http://www.ancestry.com>

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<http://www.smh.com.au/news/Technology/Ancestrycom-Boosts-Database-With-Census/2006/06/22/11...> 6/26/2006

LINCOLN'S ADMINISTRATION

Mary Todd Lincoln (1818-1882) was the daughter of Robert Todd, a pioneer settler at Lexington, Kentucky. She was said to have had an ambition from girlhood to be the wife of a President. It is also said that she refused a proposal from Stephen A. Douglas, who later ran against Lincoln. At the White House Mrs. Lincoln had little occasion for social distinction, owing to the war, and devoted her time to war work.

One of their sons died at the White House, 1862, and Thomas (Tad) died in 1871. Robert Todd Lincoln, born 1843, was a soldier in the Civil War, became Secretary of War under Garfield and later Ambassador to England and was once or twice mentioned for the Presidency.

